







LORD CORNWALLIS



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BASIL BLACKWELL, OXFORD

SELECTIONS FROM THE STATE PAPERS OF  
THE GOVERNORS-GENERAL OF INDIA  
EDITED BY THE LATE SIR GEORGE FORREST, C.I.E.  
EX-DIRECTOR OF RECORDS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

# LORD CORNWALLIS

VOLUME II  
DOCUMENTS

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
<b>PART I</b>	<b>I</b>
CAMPAIGN AGAINST TIFPOO . . . . .	I
<b>PART II</b>	
LAND ADMINISTRATION . . . . .	72
<b>PART III</b>	
MARATHA AFFAIRS . . . . .	127
<b>PART IV</b>	
OUDE AFFAIRS . . . . .	135
<b>PART V</b>	
ARMY ADMINISTRATION . . . . .	147
<b>PART VI</b>	
GENERAL AFFAIRS . . . . .	166
INDEX . . . . .	202

*Plan of the Position of the Army before Seringapatam,*  
1792 . . . . . *At End*



# LORD CORNWALLIS

## PART I

### *CAMPAIGN AGAINST TIPPoo*

EARL CORNWALLIS TO THE COURT OF DIRECTORS.

CALCUTTA,  
*February 8, 1790.*

HONOURABLE SIRs,

. . . Should any new events occur on the coast to produce an appearance of a necessity of my going there, I shall still think it incumbent upon me to execute my first intention, and you will have an opportunity of observing by the proceedings of the Board that I have in the mean time recommended all the Military and Political measures which seem to be calculated to exact ample reparation from Tippoo for his flagrant breach of the treaty of peace, and so bring the contest with him to a speedy and an honourable issue.

An equal attention to efficiency and economy has been observed in the plan for augmenting your troops at the different Presidencies, and the reinforcements and supplies which will proceed immediately from hence to Madras will, I trust, put it in General Medows's power to act offensively against Tippoo with promptitude and success. . . .

You will observe from our Proceedings that we conceived that we have had reason to disapprove of some parts of the late conduct of the Government of Fort St. George ; but as we have required explanations from that Government of some of those acts which we have considered as principally

blameable, I shall defer giving any decided opinion upon them, until those explanations shall be laid before the Supreme Board.

Much of my time and attention has been occupied in directing the variety of arrangements which the late occurrences have required, but I have been anxious at the same time that the measures which have been long in agitation for preparing the best plans in our power to make a ten years' settlement of the land revenues of these provinces, should suffer no material interruption. . . .

The different objects with which I am at present occupied do not admit of my touching upon any of the other heads of the public business; but I cannot conclude this letter without assuring you that, notwithstanding the notice that I gave you last year of my intention to resign this Government in the course of the ensuing session, and the many reasons that press me to execute that determination, I shall think it my duty to waive all personal considerations, and to remain in my present station whilst I can see any good reason to suppose that my presence in this country would essentially contribute to the security of your possessions, or materially to promote the general prosperity of your affairs.

I have, etc.,

CORNWALLIS.

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL IN COUNCIL TO THE COURT  
OF DIRECTORS.

*(Extract.)*

*February 13, 1790.*

HONOURABLE SIRS,

We beg leave to refer you to your Secret Committee for extracts of our letters to them, and copies of the papers with which they have been furnished relative to a purchase made by the Rajah of Travancore from the Dutch, of Cranganore and Jycottah. From these you will observe that, after the purchase had been concluded, it was stated by Tippoo that the Rajah had no right to make it without con-

sulting him, as the two places were subject to a quit-rent, and held as dependencies of his tributary the Rajah of Cochin, while on the other hand, it was declared both by the Rajah and the Dutch that these two forts had been conquered by the latter from the Portuguese, and, after they came into the possession of the Dutch Company, had never acknowledged a dependence on any native power in India. You will further observe that in order to furnish the most convincing proofs on our part of a spirit of conciliation, a letter was written to Tippoo in consequence of our directions by the Governor of Fort St. George, to acquaint him that if he could produce evidence of the forts having either paid tribute to the Rajah of Cochin, or been held by the Dutch under any dependence on that Rajah, since the period at which he became tributary to the Mysore Government, our ally should be obliged to restore the places to the Dutch, or, in case of his refusal, the Company's protection should be withdrawn from him. To determine this question it was proposed to Tippoo that the matter should be examined by Commissioners appointed on the part of his Government and ours for that purpose. . . . It was also written to Tippoo upon another matter of complaint, that, if it appeared that any of his rebellious subjects had taken refuge in the Travancore country, the Rajah should be obliged to dismiss them. During this disposition shown on the part of the English Government to redress any real grievance that Tippoo might have reason to complain of, his vakeel, who had been expected for some time by the Rajah of Travancore, arrived, and delivered a letter with complaints which we shall specify, because however weak the motives, we know of none other that he could bring forward for the war, which he has actually commenced against your ally the Rajah of Travancore.

1st. That the Rajah had given protection to the Rajahs of Calicut, Coottingherry, etc., who were indebted to Tippoo's Circar.

2nd. That he had purchased Cranganore from the Dutch.

3rd. That he had erected lines on a part of Cochin dependent on Calicut.



Tippoo required of the Rajah that he should withdraw his troops from Cranganore, destroy the lines he had erected, and deliver up the rebellious subject of the Circar, the vakeel further intimating from Tippoo that, if the troops were not withdrawn from Cranganore, and the lines destroyed, he would bring his army against the Rajah of Travancore.

To the first of Tippoo's complaints the Rajah replied that the Rajahs of Calicut, Coottingherry, etc., were his relations, and had been long in his country, during which no demand had been till then made for them; but as Tippoo asserted that they were indebted to him, they should be ordered to depart from the Rajah's dominions. The Rajah also declared that he had not, as was stated, ever given protection to thieves, or to Tippoo's refractory subjects.

To the second complaint the Rajah replied that he had purchased Cranganore, after having ascertained that the Dutch had an indisputable right to sell it, and that this would be confirmed by the Governor of Cochin.

Upon the third complaint the Rajah observed that that part of the country where the lines were erected was given to him before the Cochin Rajah paid tribute to Tippoo, and that the lines had been erected twenty-five years, during which no demand had been made concerning them.

But after delivering these answers to the demands of Tippoo, the Rajah of Travancore expressed his wish to have them understood as explanations, reserving his ultimate decision on the requisitions made of him until he had received the advice of the English Government for the regulation of his conduct.

It appears that at that time Tippoo was encamped with a large army at the distance of ten miles from the lines of Travancore.

His answer to the Rajah's explanations, which was expressed in terms that indicated an intention to support the requisitions he had made by force, was soon succeeded by actual hostilities. On the 29th of December he attacked in person the Rajah's lines at the head of considerable part of

his army, and after carrying and possessing them to the extent of two or three miles for several hours, he was forced to abandon them with great loss, by a spirited exertion of the Rajah's own troops, far beyond what could have been expected from people so deficient in military skill and discipline.

The account which we have received mentions Tippoo's army at the attack of the lines to have consisted of about 34,000 men, including regulars, irregulars, and cavalry, besides ten pieces of cannon. We have no account that states exactly the number of killed upon that occasion; but we are informed generally that on the side of the Rajah it was about 200, and on that of Tippoo about 1,000 men. Our intelligence acquaints us that among the latter were Jamaul Beg, the Commander of a Division of about 1,500 men, and Tippoo's son-in-law, Meer Camur ud-din Cawn. It is understood that Tippoo's horse was shot under him. There is also some reason to suppose that he received some hurt. One report mentions that he was wounded in the shoulder by a musket-ball, another that in leaping from the rampart he had been much bruised, and torn by a bamboo hedge which grows in the ditch, where his palankeen was afterwards found, with a silver box (containing some diamond rings and other jewels), his large seal with his titles, his fusee and pistols, with his name upon them, and likewise his sword.

Immediately on the appearance of Tippoo's being determined to attack the Travancore lines, the Rajah made application to your Resident for the assistance of the Company's troops in the defence of his country, and orders were given in compliance with it to Captain Knox, the commanding officer, who was prepared to act as emergency might require. The detachment was at some distance, and not engaged in the conflict at the lines.

We received advice of the war on the 26th of last month, and measures were immediately taken by this Government to assist your Presidency at Fort St. George at this important crisis.

Orders were sent to your Resident at Poona to negotiate for an alliance with the Mahratta State against Tippoo, with authority to conclude an agreement with it under the instructions given to him for that purpose, and we directed your Resident, with Mahajee Scindia, to endeavour to engage that chief and Tuccoojee Holcar, to use their interest at Poona for the same end.

Orders were also sent to your Resident at Hydrabad to take the necessary steps for securing the co-operation of Nizam Ally in the war against Tippoo.

We likewise directed the Bombay Government to comply with such requisitions as might be made of them by Mr. Malet, the Resident at Poona, for a detachment of the Company's troops to act with the Mahrattas, in case they should insist upon it as an indispensable condition of their entering into an alliance with the Company. They were also instructed to make a powerful diversion by attacking Tippoo's dominions, and by exciting his subjects and tributaries to revolt on the coast of Malabar. To enable them to effect these purposes we directed that they should immediately raise and add two companies to each of their battalions of regular native troops; and we requested their opinion whether any further augmentation of their army would be necessary, as well as a communication, as soon as they might find it convenient, of the plan they intended to pursue for executing our orders.

In writing to Fort St. George upon receiving the intelligence of Tippoo's attack on the lines at Travancore, we could not allow ourselves to doubt that upon the first information they had of it, they had considered the Company as at war with him, and had proceeded to take measures to carry it on with vigour, according to the terms of our instructions, dated the 29th of August last, a copy of which we have the honour to enclose; and consequently that, amongst other precautions, all payments to the Nabob of Arcot's private creditors, and all steps for providing an investment had immediately ceased, so that the whole of their pecuniary resources might be applied to the maintenance of the inter-

ests and honour of the Company and the British nation. We acquainted them with the orders sent to Mr. Malet and Captain Kennaway, and to the Governor in Council at Bombay, as already mentioned, and assured them that we should take every other means in our power to exact a full reparation from Tippoo for his wanton and unprovoked violation of his treaty with the Company.

On the day after the account arrived from Madras that Tippoo had actually commenced hostilities against your ally the Rajah of Travancore, the members of the Board were apprised that in the critical situation in which your affairs appeared to be in the Carnatic, the Governor-General looked upon it as a duty which he owed to his country, to lay aside all considerations of his own personal ease or responsibility, or even of what the existing laws might specifically authorise, and to determine on proceeding to the coast, as soon as might be possible, to take a temporary charge of the civil and military at the Presidency of Fort St. George. Exclusive of other reasons his Lordship thought himself called upon to take so decided a step from its being consistent with his knowledge that there was not a sufficient harmony and mutual confidence between the civil and military departments at Madras, and that there was an evident backwardness on the part of the Government to consult the officer commanding the troops, or make any use of his experience and opinion in making preparations and arrangements for carrying on a war. It was further observed by the Governor-General that the inattention, amounting in appearance to disregard, which had been shown by the Madras Government to some of our late instructions, on points of great importance, was highly deserving of our severe reprehension, and could not fail to operate as an additional reason in his mind for entertaining great doubts of the good disposition or ability of that Government to support and maintain the public interests and honour at this critical period. Under these impressions his Lordship thought himself required by a sense of duty to the Company, as well as by an attention to the general interests of the

nation, to stand forth and endeavour to avert the misfortunes with which negligence and misconduct or jealousies between the civil and military departments might be attended. With that view, and upon the ground of State necessity, it was the intention of Lord Cornwallis to take the responsibility of an irregular measure upon himself, and to propose that the Board should invest him with full powers to assume a temporary charge of the civil and military affairs at your Presidency of Fort St. George, by exercising the functions of Governor, as well as those of Commander-in-Chief. His Lordship received with the highest satisfaction the warm approbation which the Members of the Council bestowed upon this determination, and the ready concurrence which they gave to its being communicated to the Government of Bombay, and to the Residents at the Courts of the country powers, before the necessary despatch of other business would admit of its being put in any other form upon the public records. But private advices having lately been received of the arrival of the *Vestal* frigate at Anjingo on the 3rd of January, with a commission appointing General Medows to be Governor of Fort St. George, and as in consequence of the *Vestal's* having proceeded on that day from Anjingo to the Presidency of Bombay, there was every reason to hope that he would be able to take charge of his Government before, or at least as soon as, it would have been possible for Lord Cornwallis to have reached Madras; his Lordship observed that the grounds on which he had formed his first resolution were in a great measure, or perhaps entirely, done away. For as it would have been incompatible with the station which he held in this country that his Lordship should have rendered himself in any degree subordinate to the Government of Madras, and as General Medows is a man of acknowledged ability and character, and regularly invested by your Honourable Court with the offices of Governor and Commander-in-Chief at the Presidency of Fort St. George, he could not venture to say that, by relinquishing the immediate direction of the Supreme Government after a knowledge of the appointment of General

Medows, his Lordship would not be justly exposed to blame and censure for executing a determination taken a few days before, under belief of the existence of circumstances very different. Lord Cornwallis, upon further considerations, was induced to lay his attention to proceed to the coast entirely aside, unless new occasions should arise calling upon him to resume it.

The declaration of his Lordship's purpose was followed by a Minute from the Members of the Council, in which they expressed their entire concurrence in the reasons assigned by the Governor-General for the change of his former resolution, taking this occasion to assure his Lordship, generally, of their most decided support if any future exigencies should induce him to resume his first intention. They further desired to add a particular assurance, the natural results of the sentiments they expressed in regard to Lord Cornwallis's Administration, that had his Lordship proceeded to the coast it would have been their earnest and constant endeavour to have carried on the public business during his absence according to the principles and regulations at present practised and established, or that his Lordship might have thought it necessary to establish previous to his departure.

Advices received subsequently from the coast, and daily coming in, have left the Governor-General in doubt whether his duty may not yet require him to go there for a short time, in order, if possible, with due regard to the public honour, to prevent further hostilities, and under this circumstance a vessel has been engaged to take his Lordship to Madras if his going there should be rendered expedient.

Private accounts have just come in from Bombay that the *Vestal* frigate had arrived there on the 13th of January, with General Medows' commission to the Government of Fort St. George, and that he intended to proceed to that Presidency on the 20th of the same month, having had intelligence of Tippoo's attack on the Travancore lines.

We have, etc.

EARL CORNWALLIS TO C. W. MALET, ESQ.

FORT WILLIAM,  
*February 28, 1790.*

SIR,

Some considerable advantages have no doubt been experienced by the system of neutrality which the Legislature required of the Governments in this country, but it has at the same time been attended with the unavoidable inconvenience of our being constantly exposed to the necessity of commencing a war without having previously secured the assistance of efficient allies.

The late outrageous infraction of the treaty of peace by Tippoo furnishes a case in point.

We could not suffer the dominions of the Rajah of Travancore, who was included by name as our Ally in that treaty, to be ravaged or insulted without being justly charged with pusillanimity or a flagrant breach of faith, and without dishonouring ourselves by that means, in the view of all the Powers in India; and as we have been almost daily obliged for several years past to declare to the Marattas and to the Nizam that we were precluded from contracting any new engagements with them for affording them aid against the injustice or ambition of Tippoo, I must acknowledge that we cannot claim as a right the performance of those promises which the Marattas have repeatedly made to co-operate with us whenever we should be forced into a war with that Prince.

My dependence upon the support of both those Powers upon the present occasion is founded solely upon the expectation of their being guided by the common influence of passions, and by considerations of evident interest, which ought to dispose them to seize a favourable opportunity with eagerness to reduce the power of a Prince whose ambition knows no bounds, and from whom both of them have suffered numberless insults and injuries.

Notwithstanding these inducements to engage readily with us in the war, I conceive it very possible that the Marattas in particular will endeavour to extort unreasonable

stipulations from us for their co-operation. But if Tippoo shall receive no European support, it will be the less necessary for us to comply with demands of that description, as I trust that our own force will be sufficient to exact a full reparation from him for the violation of peace.

But at the same time, as the speedy termination of the war is not only a matter of the utmost consequence to the finances of the Company, but will almost preclude a possibility of Tippoo being assisted or even encouraged, in consequence of any orders that this war may produce from France, I thought it right, in order to obtain the aid of the Marattas, to offer them a defensive alliance against Tippoo, to which they would in reason and equity have a good title if they were to take an active part with us, without having made such a previous engagement.

I have no reason to believe that Tippoo has on this occasion acted in concert with the French Government in this country ; and the convulsed state of the affairs of that nation in Europe render it at least highly improbable that they will be inclined to come to an open rupture with us, by supporting a Prince who has been notoriously the aggressor.

To provide, however, as much as may be possible against that contingency, I have requested of the Commodore, who has luckily the superiority in naval force, to keep a watchful eye upon all the motions of the French in those seas, and I have also solicited a friendly attention to the same object of the Dutch Governor of Ceylon, who resents the behaviour of Tippoo to the settlement of Cochin, and has shown a disposition to take some concern about the Rajah of Travancore. But should the French, contrary to all present expectation, determine to assist Tippoo, the co-operation of the Marattas would then become of so much more value to us that it would be necessary on our part to be less difficult in assenting to conditions which might be required for our obtaining it, and with the instructions already in possession, I shall rely with great confidence on your ability and discretion for conducting the negotiation with the Poonah Ministers, upon either of the above suppositions.



I cannot bring myself to imagine that either the Marattas or the Nizam could be persuaded to take an active part against us in conjunction with Tippoo; though it does not appear entirely improbable that they may at first receive our propositions for their declaring in our favour with some degree of coldness, either with the view to obtain more favourable conditions than we may be disposed to offer, or with that of allowing two Powers who must be the objects either of their enmity or jealousy, to exhaust their strength in a struggle between themselves. And as we have uniformly professed that, unless Tippoo should violate the late treaty of peace, we were not at liberty to contract any alliances of an hostile tendency to him, I do not think it absolutely impossible that the Marattas may have taken some steps, or have made some professions of friendship, for the purpose of encouraging him to disengage us from the restraints that we have described, by attacking our ally the Rajah of Travancore.

I shall defer entering into an examination of the most judicious mode of co-operating with, or directing the exertions of, the Marattas against the common enemy, until I can hear from you in answer to my letter dated the 27th of January, because I should think it incumbent upon me to agree to almost any conditions of that nature, which they might appear determined to annex to their decision for making an immediate declaration in our favour.

I am, etc.,

CORNWALLIS.

EARL CORNWALLIS TO THE SECRET COMMITTEE.

(*Extract. Secret.*)

FORT WILLIAM,

April 12, 1790.

GENTLEMEN,

. . . I am persuaded that you will observe with satisfaction that, by the means of the powerful preparations which we have made on our own part, and by the apparent hearty

disposition of the Nizam and the Marattas to co-operate with us in this war, there is very reasonable ground to expect that we shall be able to exact ample reparation from Tippoo for his insolent and flagrant violation of the late treaty of peace.

Every personal consideration rendered it peculiarly desirable for me to take all means that were honourable to prevent an interruption of the public tranquillity, because many of the effects of my earnest endeavours since my arrival in India to restore order to the Company's finances must be counteracted by the unavoidable expenses of a war, and it may likewise be the cause of detaining me another year in this country, which I shall feel as a severe disappointment. But at a crisis when Tippoo's enmity and ambition prompted him to commit a decided act of hostility against one of our allies, I should have deservedly incurred the contempt and censure of my country if a pusillanimous anxiety for the continuance of peace had induced me to endeavour to delay an open rupture with him by abandoning the dominions of that ally to ruin or devastation, or if I had even hesitated in resenting so daring an insult, according to the clear dictates of sound policy, honour, and justice.

The cordial reception which the Nizam and the Marattas gave to the propositions that I have made to them to avail themselves of this opportunity to revenge the many injuries that they have suffered at different times from Tippoo or his father, by joining with us in the war, have been highly gratifying to me, and you will see from my correspondence with Mr. Malet and Captain Kennaway, that we have good grounds to expect that we shall obtain an early and vigorous co-operation from both these Powers upon very advantageous terms.

You will be informed by the despatches to the Court of Directors that I have been extremely dissatisfied with the conduct of the late Government of Fort St. George, and I am still under great apprehension that many fatal consequences may follow from their criminal disobedience of our orders, which directed them to consider Tippoo as at war

with the Company if he should attack any part of the ancient possessions of the Rajah of Travancore, and to make preparations accordingly for carrying it on with vigour. . . .

I trust that it is not yet entirely impossible that Tippoo may be deterred from prosecuting his designs against Travancore, by the accounts which he must constantly receive of our military preparations, or at least if he should penetrate into Travancore, that he will be obliged to evacuate that country, and to employ his troops in the defence of his own dominions, when General Medows, according to his present plan, shall be enabled to commence offensive operations against the country of Coimbatoor.

There are hardly any circumstances that could be supposed under which an expensive and a dangerous war would not be to a certain degree a distressing event to the Company's affairs. But as we know that Tippoo's enmity to the British name and interests is avowed and implacable; that he put himself to the expense of sending an embassy to our formidable European rival to propose an offensive alliance against us; that exclusive of repeated pressing general applications to the Nizam and the Marattas to join in a league with him to subvert our power; that there is at this moment an embassy from him at Hydrabad for the express purpose of soliciting his Highness to join with him in attacking our dominions, or those of our allies, and consequently that we must have looked upon a war with him as constantly impending over us, and if it could have been avoided at present, absolutely certain at some future and perhaps early period, I do not think it unreasonable to expect that it may ultimately prove fortunate both for the Company and the Natives, that by a most flagrant breach of a solemn treaty we have been forced, by adhering to the principles of honour, justice, and good faith to our allies, to come to a rupture with him at a juncture which offers to us so many considerable and evident advantages.

Should the war prove successful, we shall have a variety of interests and political arrangements to adjust with our confederates; and should the Nizam and the Marattas con-

tinue to act with the same fairness and openness that they have hitherto manifested in the preliminary negotiations, they will have the strongest claims to a liberal share of the advantages that can be secured for the Confederacy by a treaty of peace.

I have, etc.,  
CORNWALLIS.

#### MINUTE OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

*November 6, 1790.*

I know that the other members of the Board participated in my anxiety concerning the present state of the war with Tippoo Sultaun, and are equally apprehensive that the late occurrences in the country of Coimbatore may be attended with several disadvantageous consequences to the public interest.

The general success of the operations of the southern army since the commencement of hostilities, and particularly the speedy reduction of the important fortresses of Dindigul and Palacatchery, and the gallant behaviour of the detachment under the command of Colonel Floyd,<sup>1</sup> have undoubtedly occasioned great detriment to the enemy, and, in the opinion of all who are candid and know the truth, have done singular honour to the British arms. It cannot, however, be denied that the retreat of Colonel Floyd's corps, and the loss of the artillery which he was obliged to abandon, have furnished the enemy with plausible means of imposing upon his own subjects and upon our allies, by laying claim to a victory, and the real interruption that has been given to the collection of provisions, and the loss of magazines that has been sustained by Tippoo's irruption upon that occasion, will, I am much afraid, be attended with the bad

<sup>1</sup> Colonel, afterwards General Sir John Floyd, Bart., so created January 23, 1816, Colonel 8th Dragoons; born February 22, 1748, died January 10, 1818. Married first, January 29, 1791, Rebecca Juliana, daughter of Charles Darke, Esq., of Madras; second, July 29, 1805, Anna, daughter of Crosbie Morgell, Esq., of Castle Morgell, and widow of Sir Barry Denny, Bart. He was in action in Germany before he was twelve years old.

effects of preventing our army from entering the Mysore country before the commencement of the Carnatic rains, and consequently of reducing it to a state of entire inactivity till the month of January next.

I have the highest opinion of General Medows's zeal for the public good, as well as for his professional abilities, and I am perfectly convinced that no exertion would be wanting on his part in expediting every arrangement which may be necessary to continue without interruption, or to resume without delay, the execution of our offensive operations, which can alone produce an honourable termination of the war; but if unfortunately our armies in the Carnatic should not be able to act before the beginning of January next, we should not only be under great difficulties to account for the delay to the satisfaction of our allies, but we should also have the most serious grounds for apprehension that Tippoo would avail himself of that opportunity to turn his whole force against the Mahrattas and the Nizam, and endeavour either to weaken their power, or intimidate them into a negotiation for a separate peace.

Under these circumstances it has appeared to me that, exclusive of every measure that may be adopted for promoting our own offensive operations against the Mysore country in the beginning of January, it may be of great consequence to the public interest that some immediate steps should be taken, which may tend to animate and encourage our allies to persevere with firmness in the favourable disposition which they have lately shown to perform their engagements; and although I am not vain enough to suppose that the military operations would be conducted more ably or with more success by myself than by General Medows, yet from the station which I hold in this country, and from the friendly intercourse which I have hitherto had the good fortune to maintain both with the Nizam and the Peshwa, I conceive it to be possible that my presence in the scene of action would be considered by our allies as a pledge of our sincerity, and of our confident hopes of success against the common enemy, and by that means operate as an

encouragement to them to continue their exertions and abide by their stipulations.

I am aware that some inconvenience may arise by my absence from the seat of Government, and that the existing laws do not describe the powers which ought in such a case to be delegated by the Supreme Board to the Governor-General. But notwithstanding these objections, I am so fully impressed with the belief that the public interest will be on this occasion best promoted by my undertaking the direction of the war in person, that I have resolved, with the approbation of the Board, to proceed to Madras in the beginning of the next month; and should the Board concur in opinion with me on the propriety and utility of this measure, I need hardly suggest that it will become necessary to invest me with such powers as may be thought suitable to my station of Governor-General, and which may appear to be calculated to enable me to apply the whole force of the Company with energy for the prosecution of the war, or to avail myself with promptitude and effect of any favourable opportunity that may offer, for negotiating and obtaining an honourable and advantageous peace.

Enjoying as I do the high satisfaction of living on terms of cordiality and friendship, both public and private, with my colleagues in office, and well acquainted as I am with their earnest desire to support my endeavours for promoting the public prosperity, I could not entertain a doubt, even if I had not formerly on a similar occasion been flattered with the most liberal declarations of their confidence, that the measures for the internal government of Bengal which I have hitherto pursued, and in the success of which my share of responsibility is great, will, during my absence, be uniformly supported and punctually executed. The completion of the settlement of the revenues upon the principles which have been already adopted, and adherence to all regulations that have been established, and a strict regard to economy in all branches of the public expenditure, are amongst the principal objects which I trust will command the attention of the members of the Board; and from my knowledge of

their disposition, I have the most implicit reliance on their communicating with me upon all points of internal business in the manner that will best tend to promote the public good, and to preserve my authority in this Government.

The Members of the Council may, on the other hand, be assured that I shall correspond and communicate my sentiments to them with as much punctuality and expedition as the nature of the Service in which I am going will allow, and that I shall not only give an accurate detail of any material transactions or occurrences that may happen, but also endeavour to render a satisfactory account of every part of my public conduct; I shall likewise on all occasions receive their advice and suggestions with all the attention and deference which is due to private friends, and to the acting Members of the Supreme Government.

MAJOR-GENERAL MEDOWS TO EARL CORNWALLIS.

CAMP AT PANNADOOR,  
*January 7, 1791.*

MY DEAR LORD,

I received yours of the 31st yesterday; and am not a little happy that my letter must have anticipated your wishes with regard to my intentions.

I received yesterday a letter from General Abercromby and one from Colonel Hartley. Cannanore surrendering so soon proves Tippoo defends places no better than he attacks them.

He is ambitious, and may be a great statesman, which I doubt, but I deny that he is a warrior or a hero; and I mean that the three Governors, the Nizam, and the Peshwah, should dine at Seringapatam, with the old Queen of Mysore<sup>1</sup> sitting at the head of the table. One is just as likely as t'other, but it is more than likely we may crush this dis-

<sup>1</sup> Lechmee, daughter of Copand Raj, and widow of Chiam Raj, whom Hyder had dethroned in 1763. Chiam Raj's son, by a previous wife, died in 1796, leaving a child three years old, who was restored to the throne of his ancestors in 1799, on the death of Tippoo.

turber of the public peace, if it is not sounder politicks only to cripple him ; but for my own part I freely confess I should prefer the dignity and justice of dethroning this cruel tyrant and usurper, and restoring the kingdom to the Hindoo family—the lawful owner—to the wiser policy perhaps of only clipping his wings so effectually that he could soar no more in our time. In the mean time

I am ever yours and Ross's, whilst

WM. MEDOWS.

LORD CORNWALLIS TO COURT, APRIL 21, 1791.

*Abstract of Letters from Bengal in the Secret, Political, and Foreign Departments, vol. i., pp. 586-87.*

March of the Army from Velhout to Bangalore. Attack injudiciously made by Lieutenant-Colonel Floyd with the Cavalry, on the enemy's rear. His retreat with some loss. Wounded in the face. Capture of the Potta of Bangalore and siege of the Fort in the presence of Tippoo and his whole army. The fort stormed on the 21 March. Vast number of cannon taken, also grain and military stores in great abundance. Tippoo's flight from his post at the south side of Bangalore. Lord Cornwallis's march to join the Nizam's Cavalry under Taje Wunt, and to facilitate the junction of the Corps coming from the Carnatic with a supply of provisions and stores. General Abercrombie to march from Malabar towards Seringapatam (with a battering train, etc.). Tippoo pursued by Lord Cornwallis to the westward. Junction with Taje Wunt on the 13 April. His force estimated at 15,000 or 16,000 Horse; ill-disciplined. Lord Cornwallis's movement to Venkethgherry. Anxious to take Seringapatam before the rains. Alacrity manifested by the Nizam and Marattas of late. Fresh overtures made by Tippoo to Lord Cornwallis. Commendation of the Bengal Council, and of the King's and Company's troops.



## EARL CORNWALLIS TO THE COURT OF DIRECTORS.

CAMP NEAR BANGALORE,

*September 7, 1791.*

HONOURABLE SIRS,

I had the honour, in my letter dated at Vencatagherry on the 20th of April last, to give your Honourable Court an account of the principal operations of the army under my command prior to that period, and to communicate my intention to attack Seringapatam, if it should be found practicable, with a view to leave no means untried to bring this war to a speedy termination ; and although the multiplicity of objects which perpetually break in upon my time, and press for immediate attention in my present situation, will not permit me to enter into many details, I shall now proceed to explain to you the manner in which the premature setting in of the monsoon rains, the difficulty of passing the Caveri river, and the inactivity of the Nizam's cavalry, operated as irresistible reasons to force me to desist at that time from undertaking the siege of the enemy's capital, and to acquaint you with the occurrences that have materially contributed to reduce Tippoo's strength and resources, and to give a very favourable prospect of success to the plan of operations which has been adopted by all the members of the confederacy for the ensuing campaign.

Previous to the commencement of my march to Seringapatam, Tippoo, in addition to the mortification which he suffered from the loss of Bangalore, had also felt the consequences of that blow at a great distance, and our allies had from its effects gained very decisive advantages.

The strong fortresses of Durwar and Gopaul had long been invested and besieged by the Marattas and the Nizam, and with so little prospect of success, that it had been more than once under the consideration of the Courts of Poona and Hydrabad whether they should not convert these sieges into blockades to set their armies at liberty for more active operations. But the news of the fall of Bangalore, which seemed to have been unexpected by the garrisons of these

places, so effectually intimidated them, that, although in no shape reduced to extremity or even distress, they agreed to surrender. Large magazines of military stores, which had been amassed in those places at a vast expense by Tippoo, fell into the hands of the captors; and during the time that I was employed in forming a junction with the Nizam's cavalry, and in drawing supplies and reinforcements from the Carnatic, they also obtained complete possession of the whole of the enemy's extensive and valuable territories laying between the Khristna and Tumbuddra.

Nothing of consequence occurred on the march from Vencatagherry to Bangalore, and after having taken out of that place heavy guns and supplies of military stores and provisions to the utmost extent that could be transported by the general zealous assistance that I received from the officers of the army, and by all the draught and carriage cattle in the possession of the public, and after having received information that General Abercromby with a battering train, which, in addition to my own, I was in hopes would be sufficient for the accomplishment of our object, was at the head of the Poodicherrim Ghaut, and in readiness to co-operate with me, I moved on the 3rd of May from the neighbourhood of Bangalore with a respectable and sufficient corps of artillery, the Nizam's Horse, His Majesty's 19th Regiment of Dragoons, five regiments of native cavalry, six King's regiments, and one of the Company's European regiments, and seventeen battalions of native infantry.

Tippoo, after calling in all his detachments, had about that time encamped near Magri, and soon after receiving information of my movement he marched by one of the most direct roads to his capital, where he arrived on the 8th or 9th of May.

I knew that he had long before given orders to burn the villages and to destroy the provisions and forage on all the roads by which we could march to Seringapatam, and therefore no road was in these respects preferable to another; but after the most mature consideration I determined to

take the most easterly route, which passes through Can-kanelly, though it is not the shortest, because it would lead us near the banks of the Caveri for many miles before we should reach Seringapatam; and as there is no place of strength near the capital on the north side of the river in which I could lodge the heavy artillery and stores in security for a few days with a moderate garrison, I was in hopes that I might be able to cross that river with the whole army, and to effect a junction with General Abercromby, before I should find it necessary to approach near to the ultimate object of the movement.

It soon appeared that only a small number of the enemy's irregular horse had been appointed to attend to that road; but by an extraordinary activity on their part, and a most unaccountable supineness and want of exertion on the part of the Nizam's cavalry, which neither my requisitions nor orders could overcome, we suffered some loss both in baggage and followers on the march, and not only the villages were laid in ashes, but all the inhabitants of the country on the whole of the road to Seringapatam were also with the most unrelenting barbarity carried off, and more completely removed beyond our reach than could have been supposed to be practicable.

These severe measures of the enemy, and the inactivity of the Nizam's cavalry, who could not be prevailed upon to forage at a distance, frequently occasioned a scarcity in the camp both of forage for the cattle and provisions for the followers; and in a country of which no minute or correct description has hitherto been published, or till now been obtained by any European, I experienced the greatest inconveniences in many shapes by the removal of the inhabitants.

The Caveri is never, I believe, lower than it was during the greatest part of last May; and as none of the people who pretended to be acquainted with its course, and who were repeatedly examined upon that point, had ever started a doubt of its being passable for an army with heavy artillery below Seringapatam, I was not a little surprised and disappointed at finding from my own personal inspection, or

from the reports of intelligent officers who were sent with detachments in search of fords at different places, that from its bed being rocky and difficult beyond what I have ever seen for so great a tract in any other river, it appeared nearly, if not utterly, impracticable to pass our heaviest guns over at any ford that could be discovered below Seringapatam.

After several disappointments at other places, I was for a short time encouraged to hope that a ford might, by considerable labour, be rendered practicable near the large village of Arrakerry, which lay upon our road, and about nine or ten miles distant from the capital; and, if it could have been accomplished, my intention was to have possessed myself of the new fort of Mysore, which is only distant about twelve or fourteen miles from that part of the river, and was described to me to be in so unfinished a state as to be incapable of making a considerable resistance against our army, though sufficiently advanced to be easily rendered, with a garrison of ours, a safe depot for a few days for our stores and heavy artillery, and to make two or three marches with the army lightly equipped towards Periapatam, in order to put myself between Tippoo and General Abercromby, and by that means render our junction easy and secure.

The army arrived at Arrakerry on the 13th, and a particular examination of that ford, as well as of the river for a considerable distance above and below it, obliged me early in the forenoon of the 14th to relinquish all idea of being able to execute that plan; and after minutely re-examining every person in the army who was acquainted with the river, my expectations of being able to form an early junction with General Abercromby rested solely on assurances that the ford near the village of Kannambaddy, about 8 or 9 miles above Seringapatam, over which it was positively asserted that Hyder Ali had frequently passed 12-pounders, and sometimes heavier guns, would be practicable.

In the mean time, however, I conceived that Tippoo had furnished an opening which would enable me to force him to risk an action, and I resolved not to let slip so favourable an opportunity to endeavour to obtain the reputation to our

arms which must necessarily result from a victory in the sight of his capital, and in the event of my being able to cut off the greatest part of his army, to be prepared to follow up the advantage to the greatest extent that might be possible.

Upon my arrival on the ground which was marked for the encampment at Arrakerry, I saw a considerable body of the enemy at the distance of about six miles in our front, who were drawn up with their right to the river, and their left to a mountain of a very rugged and inaccessible appearance; but I considered them in no other light at that time than as a large detachment sent to observe our motions, without any design to wait for our approach.

My intention to pass the river at that place, if the ford could be rendered practicable, and the hopes that were at first held out of the success of our working parties, occasioned my halting on the 14th in the camp at Arrakerry, and I then obtained certain intelligence that although only a small part of the enemy's force could be seen from the ground in our possession, yet that Tippoo with his whole army had encamped between us and Seringapatam, his right covered by the Caveri, and his left extended along the front of a high mountain, with a deep swampy ravine, the passage of which was defended by batteries running along the whole of his front; and that being encouraged by the advantage of this position, as well as those of the intermediate ground, which by the river on our side, and a steep ridge of hills on the other, was narrowed to a space nowhere between the two encampments exceeding a mile and a half, and within cannon-shot of his line not above one mile in breadth he had determined, at the hazard of the event of a battle, to endeavour to prevent our nearer approach to his capital.

In consequence of this information, and from my having ascertained from the few people in camp who had any knowledge of the adjoining country, as well as from the observations of intelligent persons who were employed for the purpose, that it was practicable, though difficult, to cross the ridge on our right from the great round on which we were en-

I camped to a road which leads from Cenapatam to Seringapatam, I resolved upon that knowledge to attempt, by a night march, to turn the enemy's flank, and by gaining his rear before daylight to cut off the retreat of the main body of his army to the island and fort of Seringapatam.

Orders were accordingly given with the utmost secrecy to the principal officers who were to be employed, that the 19th Dragoons, the three strongest of the native regiments of cavalry, His Majesty's six regiments, and twelve battalions of native infantry, with field-pieces only, should be in readiness to march at eleven o'clock at night, leaving their piquets and camp-guards behind, and their tents standing; and Colonel Duff, with these detachments and the remainder of the army (except the Nizam's Horse, who were directed to follow me at daylight), was left in charge of the encampment, provisions, stores, and heavy artillery.

We had suffered greatly during the preceding week by rains uncommonly frequent and heavy so early in the season; but unluckily on that particular night we had for several hours the most violent thunder, lightning, and rain, that I have seen in this part of India.

The ground of our encampment having been intersected by some ruined villages and inclosures, and several deep ravines, much valuable time was lost before it was possible to form the troops in the order of march which was directed; and owing to the heavy rain and excessive darkness of the night, I was obliged to halt so frequently, after I had begun to move forward, either on account of many of the regiments losing at different times the line of march, or of the weakness of the gun-bullocks, which were jaded and exhausted by the severity of the storm, that I had only advanced a few miles when the day began to dawn.

All hopes were then at an end of being able to execute my original plan, but having accomplished the part of the march that had been described to me as the most difficult, and having the utmost confidence in the valour and discipline of the King's and Company's troops, I determined to persevere in endeavouring to force Tippoo to hazard an

action on ground which I hoped would be less advantageous to him than that which he had chosen, with the expectation that a complete victory might not only relieve many of our temporary distresses, but tend to bring the war to a very speedy conclusion.

The army therefore continued its march, and the movement had been so entirely unexpected by the enemy that we had begun to descend the heights on the eastward of the deep ravine that I have mentioned, and at the distance of four or five miles from the left of their camp, before they took the alarm.

After some movements, the object of which could not for a short time be clearly ascertained, it appeared that Tippoo, notwithstanding that we were advancing by a route for which he was not prepared, did not decline to risk the event of a battle in a new position. He detached immediately from his main body a large corps of infantry and cavalry with eight guns, to occupy the summit of a rising ground about two miles from the extremity of his left, which terminates to the northward in an abrupt precipice in the middle of a plain, and though the ascent is broken by large rocks, and some intermediate lesser heights rise gradually for about a mile and a half or two miles from a valley that was in our front, and which continued to the Caveri, and divided the ridge of hills that we had crossed during the night from another steep ridge consisting principally of two large mountains (on a projecting point of the southernmost of which stands the Karighaut Pagoda), running nearly at right angles to the former at the distance of about a mile and a half, and extending very near to the Caveri, opposite to the island of Seringapatam.

Whilst the corps was on its march to possess itself of the summit that I have mentioned, Tippoo was employed in changing the front of his army to the left, covering his left flank with the steep hill which had been in his rear, and his right flank with the ravine which ran along his former front.

The disposition on our side for action could only be made on the ascent of the heights, to the summit of which the

enemy's detachment was then moving, and from which it was absolutely necessary to dislodge it before I could attack their main body. Our march was therefore continued in that direction across the valley, through which ran a continuation of the ravine which covered the enemy's right ; but owing to the depth of that ravine, the weak state of the gun-bullocks, and the near approach of a large body of the enemy's horse, that, though repulsed in several attempts, appeared to be prepared to take advantage of the least disorder in any of our battalions, it was upwards of two hours after the passage of the head of the column, before the whole infantry could cross to the same side of the ravine with the enemy, and consequently before the disposition for action could be completed ; and during that time we suffered some loss from the guns on the heights opposite to the head of the column, and were severely galled by a well-directed though distant fire from the artillery of the enemy's main body, which had formed nearly parallel to the direction of our march.

Under these difficulties, and under the disadvantage of the want of all satisfactory local information, beyond what could be seen, of the intended field of battle and of the adjoining country, nine battalions were formed opposite to the enemy's main body, in a first line under the command of Major-General Medows and Lieutenant-Colonel Stuart, four battalions in a second line under Lieutenant-Colonel Harris, and five under Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell, were destined for the attack of the enemy's corps on the summit of the hill upon our right. This attack had been unavoidably postponed until the other parts of the disposition could be made, and by that means Tippoo should be effectually awed, and prevented from making any attempt on the flank or rear of those troops whilst they were moving forward to drive his detachment from their post. Our own cavalry and the Nizam's Horse were left out of the reach of the cannonade, on the descent of the rising ground on the opposite side of the ravine, in readiness to take advantage of any confusion they might observe in the enemy's army ; and orders were



given to Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell, after succeeding in his attack, to leave only a sufficient force to retain possession of the summit of the hill, and to advance immediately with the remainder of his corps, and endeavour to possess himself of the mountains which covered the left flank of the main army of the enemy.

A rocky height afforded considerable protection to the troops from the enfilade from the hill on our right, during the time that was necessarily employed in making the disposition and forming the lines; which being accomplished, I began the action by ordering Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell's corps to attack the hill on our right, and upon observing that he had, without much loss or difficulty, completely succeeded, I moved forward with the main body of the army, and the action soon became general along the whole front.

The enemy's cavalry that had harassed us, and frequently attempted to break in upon the infantry whilst the column was passing the ravine, made no stand after we were prepared to advance, part of it retreating to the westward of the ridge on which the Karighaut Pagoda stands, with the infantry that had been driven from the hill by Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell, and the remainder falling into the rear of the main army. Their infantry on this occasion showed a much better countenance than usual, which perhaps may be principally attributed to Tippoo's own presence and exertion amongst them; but in a short time they began to waver, and soon after, upon the cavalry moving towards their right; and three battalions of Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell's corps advancing rapidly to gain the heights on their left, they entirely gave way.

At this moment our own cavalry made a gallant charge, but after dispersing and almost destroying a small body of infantry that made a very determined resistance, were soon obliged to fall back from a more considerable body of infantry that had rallied and made a stand on a space of broken rocky ground, extremely disadvantageous for cavalry; and at the moment of their retreat, and whilst the whole of our

first line was impeded by it, the Nizam's Horse, which had followed Colonel Floyd across the ravine, with very good intentions, but very injudiciously, threw themselves in an unwieldy mass into the front of our left wing, on a piece of ground so rugged and rocky, as well as so near to the enemy's batteries on the island of Seringapatam, that they could not act with efficacy in front, and continued to prevent our line of infantry from advancing, by which means an invaluable though short space of time was lost, which enabled the enemy to avail themselves of the vicinity of the batteries upon the island, and, by retreating to their protection in the utmost confusion, to save their army from entire destruction.

Fatigued and exhausted as the troops were by the badness of the night, the tediousness of the march, and by their long and extraordinary exertions during an excessive hot day, and covered as the beaten army were by the works on the island, and by the guns of the fort, nothing more could then be attempted; and the army accordingly, after the arrival of the tents from Arrakerry, encamped just beyond the reach of the cannon on the island, and nearly on the ground upon which the action had terminated.

Three of the enemy's guns were taken on the hill that was attacked by the corps under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell, and one gun, with a great number of standards and colours, were taken from their main body. Their loss in men was very considerable, but the number could not be ascertained.

It may probably appear to you and to any other persons unacquainted with the peculiar situation of Seringapatam, that after having defeated the enemy's army I might have proceeded in the attack of the place without losing time, or putting myself to any material inconvenience to form a junction with General Abercromby; but even if I had thought the heavy guns that I had brought with me sufficient for the siege, I could not there, as at Bangalore, choose my point of attack, and keep an army in a compact state to resist the whole force of the enemy and defend my approaches. In

order to besiege the fort it would have been necessary to force my passage over to the island, and this can only be done on the north side, opposite to the Karighaut Pagoda, where there is a good ford at a distance of more than a mile from the fort; for the ford on the south side is not only very rugged and difficult, but is likewise commanded, within seven hundred yards, by the works of Seringapatam, and the bridge, which is still standing on that side, is immediately under the guns of the place.

The ground on the south side rises gradually from the river; and as Tippoo would certainly have crossed over with his army to that side, as soon as he saw my batteries in sufficient forwardness to enable me to cross the passage of the northern ford, I should have been exposed, on getting upon the island, to a cross-fire from the fort and from the enemy's army, which would not only have rendered it impossible for me to attempt the siege, but would probably have obliged me to abandon the island with considerable loss.

It was therefore necessary, before any attempt could be made upon the island, that a force able to resist the attack of Tippoo's whole army should be stationed on the south side of the river, which could only be effected by my joining some of my battalions to the corps under General Abercromby; and I therefore determined, after allowing the troops to recover themselves a little from their fatigues by a halt of two days on the field of battle, to proceed to the Kannambaddy ford according to my former intention.

The soil of all the parts of the Mysore country that I have seen is, in general dry and by nature unfruitful, and sustenance either for men or animals can only be raised upon it by a most persevering industry in its inhabitants; but the country adjoining to Seringapatam is peculiarly rugged and barren. The mountains are immense bare rocks, and the lower grounds are so thin in soil, and so universally and closely covered with large loose stones, that no considerable produce can be raised from them by the exertions of any degree of industry whatever.

The utmost pains had likewise been taken by the enemy

during the two preceding months to destroy all the villages and every particle of forage and provisions belonging to the inhabitants within a circuit of several miles, and to those circumstances, of so much disadvantage to the operations of an army, was to be added the premature setting in of the monsoon, near a month before the usual period; and by the united operation of the causes that I have stated we had not only during the six or eight preceding days suffered very considerable losses amongst our draught and carriage cattle, but the greatest part of those which survived were at this time reduced to a very weakly condition.

We were obliged to make so great a détour that we could only reach the Kannambaddy ford in two marches, and as the face of the country is exceedingly uneven and hilly, intersected with a number of deep ravines, and the road for the heavy guns was to be made the whole way by our own pioneers, these marches were found so difficult that, notwithstanding the pressure for time, I was forced to halt one day after the first march, by the draught cattle having been completely exhausted in accomplishing it.

Considerable detachments of troops were ordered to attend and assist the heavy guns on the second day's march; but the bullocks were so extremely reduced that even with the aid of the soldiers at the drag-ropes their progress was so tedious that the body of the army was upwards of twelve hours in marching as many miles, and the rear-guard did not reach the encampment near the ford till nine o'clock in the evening of the 20th of May.

It was not, however, till after I had received the reports from the different departments on the following morning of the general wretched condition of the public cattle of the army that I saw the impossibility of moving the heavy guns and stores from the spot where they then were, and that it became necessary for me to decide on relinquishing entirely the prosecution of the plan for the campaign, in which General Abercromby has been instructed to co-operate.

I then lost no time in communicating my determination to General Abercromby, who had advanced as far as Peria-

patam ; and I directed him, after descending the Ghaut with the troops under his command, to put them into cantonments on the coast of Malabar during the rains, and until the proper season should return for recommencing our operations.

The effects of several circumstances from which we had already suffered many inconveniences, pressed upon us particularly hard at this juncture, and none more than the conduct of the Nizam's cavalry, who were now, if possible, more inactive and more inattentive to my requisitions than ever.

Far from rendering the services that I had expected from so numerous and powerful a body of horse, in facilitating our foraging and covering extensive tracts of country from which our followers as well as themselves might have obtained considerable supplies of provisions, they had, regardless of my remonstrances since the commencement of our march from Bangalore, hardly ever sent a detachment beyond the piquets of our infantry, and had persevered in exhausting the small stock of forage and provisions which, in spite of the devastation made by the enemy, was generally found within the bounds of the encampments, and which, if we had not been encumbered with them, we could have commanded for the use of our own army.

By this extraordinary degree of obstinate supineness, that large body of men, with their horses and numerous followers, about this time experienced the severest distress from scarcity, and the vast multitude of people belonging to our army, for whom it is impossible for the public to carry a stock of provisions, were reduced to nearly the same situation. Rice became so dear in the bazars that either the pressure of hunger or the temptation of the extravagant prices proved too powerful against all precautions that could be taken, and occasioned depredations of the grain that had been provided and brought with us to supply the fighting men of the army to so alarming an extent that the apprehension that there would be a want of grain for the soldiers long before the stores that had been provided for them ought to

have been expended, operated powerfully with other reasons to force me to fall back to Bangalore.

Urgent, however, as our own necessities were to move nearer to our supplies, I could not leave Tippoo at liberty to employ his whole force against General Abercromby, and therefore resolved to remain in my position near the ford, which held the main body of the enemy's army in check at Seringapatam, until I should have reason to believe that General Abercromby was out of all danger of being interrupted in his retreat, by Tippoo's either marching in person or considerably reinforcing the corps which I knew he had detached against him, which alone was not of sufficient strength to make me apprehend that it could give General Abercromby any material molestation.

In the mean time I gave directions to burst eleven heavy guns (eight eighteen and three four-and-twenty pounders), to bury and destroy the military stores that could not be carried with us, and to deliver nearly the whole of the rice in our possession to the troops, which, on a calculation of easy marches, would have been sufficient to subsist them until they should arrive at Bangalore—measures which had now become the more indispensably necessary, as, in addition to the losses of public cattle that had suffered from the causes that I have now mentioned, an epidemic disorder not uncommon in this country had broke out amongst them, and had carried off several thousands in a few days.

Having remained long enough to give ample time to General Abercromby to fall back from Periapatam, I moved from my encampment near the ford on the morning of the 26th, with the intention to proceed to Bangalore, and to employ a few months in refreshing and refitting the army, and to make every other necessary preparation for resuming our operations against the enemy's capital as soon as the rivers should subside, unless Tippoo should in the meantime agree to make such concessions as the Confederates might reasonably think they had a right to extract from him.

Upon reaching the ground that had been fixed upon for the first day's encampment, I was told, to my great surprise,

that some Maratta messengers had arrived to inform me that the two Maratta armies, under the command of Hurry Punt and Purseram Bhow, were at no great distance from us, and that their advanced corps under Appa Saheb, Purseram Bhow's son, was almost in sight.

I had for some weeks before given up all hopes of being joined by the Marattas, with whose dilatory conduct I was much dissatisfied; and although I saw that their junction at this critical time would be attended with many advantages to the common cause, I could not help lamenting, as not only our heavy guns were now destroyed, but General Abercromby's corps had actually descended the Ghauts, that by their tardiness in commencing their march, and from my having even been deprived of all knowledge of their approach by the vigilance of the enemy's light troops, and the criminal inactivity of the Nizam's cavalry, an opportunity was lost which could not now be recalled, to drive the enemy's whole army, that had so recently been humbled by a defeat, and would not have dared to keep the field, into the island of Seringapatam, where its distresses must soon have reduced Tippoo to the necessity of submitting to the terms of peace that we might have prescribed to him.

I took measures, however, immediately for fixing as early a day as possible for an interview with the chiefs, which by a movement of both armies took place three days after; and as it was of great consequence to cultivate a good understanding with them, I said very little on the just grounds which I had to complain of the lateness of their arrival, and contented myself at the first meeting with obtaining a knowledge of the nature of their instructions and of their future intentions.

They made the most explicit declarations that they were ordered by the Peshwa, and that it was equally their own inclination, to act entirely in concert with me; and in the course of two or three conferences it was not only settled that all the confederate forces should keep the field in the Mysore country during the rains, but they also acquiesced in a general arrangement that I proposed for the disposition

of the armies, the principal objects of which were to give me an easy and safe communication with the Carnatic, to enable me to draw from thence the supplies of artillery and stores that would be necessary for prosecuting the operations of the ensuing campaign, to subsist the allied armies as much as might be possible at the expense of the enemy, and to endeavour to deprive him of the revenues and resources of all the northern parts of his dominions.

Having stated to the Maratta chiefs the danger of attempting to maintain the communication with their own country by the route to the westward of Chitteldroog, by which Purseram Bhow had marched from Darwar, they agreed to relinquish it, and to be satisfied with that by Sera and Roydroog, which I recommended as preferable, on condition that I would delay my march to the eastward until all the detachments which Purseram Bhow had left upon his route could join the army or be sent back across the Tum-buddra, to which, upon their assurances that we should be able to purchase from the grain-dealers attached to them a sufficient quantity of grain to subsist our troops and followers for some time to come, I consented.

In order therefore to effect those purposes, we halted frequently, and having, soon after the junction of the Marattas, sent back to the Nizam all those of his troops that had either from the loss or the weakness of their horses become unfit for service, the confederate force moved together, gradually though slowly, towards Bangalore; and upon our arrival within about twenty miles of that place, it was thought advisable to acquiesce in Purseram Bhow's wishes to move with the army under his own immediate command towards Sera, to secure that communication and to possess himself of the adjoining country, according to the plan that had been arranged, Hurry Punt, with his division and the Nizam's cavalry, remaining with our army.

After drawing from Bangalore four heavy guns and a supply of provisions, I marched from the neighbourhood of that place on the 15th of July towards Oussore, a fortress upon which Tippoo has bestowed much labour and expense,



but which, though in a very defensible state, was not completely finished. The garrison abandoned the place on the approach of a detachment that I had sent forward to invest and summon it, but they at the same time sprung a mine under one of the batteries that did considerable damage, and attempted, though unsuccessfully, by a train to blow up the powder magazine.

Conformable to my plan, I placed the heavy guns and the spare stores and provisions in the fort of Oussore with a good garrison; and the damage occasioned by the explosion was ordered to be repaired with all possible expedition. A strong escort was at the same time sent to bring a large convoy of various kinds of supplies from Amboor.

On the 18th of July the army marched to support a brigade that I had detached to endeavour to reduce the hill-forts adjoining to the Palicode Pass, by far the easiest and best in the whole range of mountains that divide the Mysore country from the Carnatic; and in a few days we were fortunate enough, by the spirited behaviour of our troops and the pusillanimity of the garrisons, to obtain possession of a sufficient number of those small but exceedingly strong places to afford considerable protection to the march of our convoys, and to render it hazardous and difficult for the enemy to send troops into the Barramaul.

I conceive it to be needless to trouble you with a detail of the preparations that will be made in the course of the next two months for insuring success to the plan of operations for the ensuing campaign, which will be nearly similar to that which was intended for the last; and should therefore content myself with assuring you that no exertions of mine shall be wanting to render them complete, and that I have an entire confidence in meeting with the most thorough support from all your Governments.

It would be vain to suppose that we should remain long undisturbed by an enemy so able and active as Tippoo; but although, from the immense extent of our possessions and posts, it may be impossible to prevent him from gaining some small advantage during the period that we are restrained

from carrying on offensive operations, I trust it will not be in his power to do anything which can either materially injure or impede the execution of our main objects.

He has lately, as I had long expected, made an attempt to disturb the country of Coimbatore and our southern provinces, in which he has been completely foiled by the gallantry and good conduct of the officers in that quarter; but he has been successful in routing a small detachment of irregulars which Purseram Bhow had left at a great distance from his army to blockade the hill fort of Mudgheri, not far from Sera.

I cannot say that I was much surprised at this accident; and indeed, notwithstanding my repeated recommendations to them to be cautious in detaching, and to avoid bad and distant posts, they are so apt to deviate from system in the execution of any plan, that I am afraid they must feel the ill-consequences of improvident conduct still more severely before I shall be able completely to command their attention.

The inconveniences which the expense of this war must occasion to your finances have given me the most sincere concern; but, on the other hand, it is a source of satisfaction to myself, as it must be to every other person who feels for the interest and honour of the Company and the nation, that there is at present a favourable prospect that it will be terminated with valuable acquisitions to the Company and to the other members of the Confederacy, and with the humiliation of a Prince who forced us to draw the sword by a wanton violation of a solemn treaty, and whose overgrown power, directed by a perfidious and barbarous disposition, and by a spirit of insatiable ambition, has frequently given just cause of alarm for the safety of your possessions in this part of India, and has long rendered him an object of the utmost terror to all his other neighbours.

Impelled, however, as I was, by the consideration of the state of your finances, to put something to the hazard in attempting to bring the war to a speedy conclusion, the information that I had received of the situation of political affairs in Europe operated also strongly to induce me to

make an effort to reduce the enemy's capital, and by that means entirely break his power before the setting-in of the periodical rains; and although a number of circumstances combined to counteract my endeavour to shorten in that manner the duration of the war, yet, whilst the failure has reflected no disgrace upon the British arms, the attempt has, in other respects, produced many solid advantages to the common cause, and without having been attended with any material addition to the expense which we must necessarily have incurred if the army had during the same period remained in a state of inactivity.

I have reason to be persuaded that all instances on my part would have been ineffectual, and that nothing but an apprehension that their interests might suffer by their not being present at the reduction of Seringapatam could have prevailed upon both the Maratta chiefs to leave in other hands the collection of the revenues in the enemy's fertile northern dominions that they had overrun, and to advance so rapidly to the southward to form a junction with me; and it is in consequence of the junction, and of their having consented to remain with their numerous and powerful cavalry to act in concert with us, that we have been able for so long a period to hem Tippoo with his army into a very circumscribed space, and to deprive him of all revenue or supplies of any kind from the greatest part of his extensive territories. At the time that we suffered the greatest inconvenience from the inactivity of the Nizam's cavalry and I expressed my dissatisfaction in the strongest terms at the behaviour of the chiefs, I was perfectly sensible that even their presence contributed to awe the enemy, and was otherwise of value as being a proof of the strong connexion of the Confederacy; and I saw no ground to impute blame to his Highness on their account in any other shape than that of want of judgment in placing at the head of so large a portion of his forces such a man as Rajah Teige Wunt, who is destitute to an uncommon degree of almost every quality which a military commander ought to possess, and in employing several chiefs under him who, from their rank

and superior military experience, must naturally become his advisers or have great influence with him, but on whose honour and fidelity His Highness should not have placed a dependence.

I have from time to time conveyed these sentiments to the Nizam and his Minister in the most explicit terms, and I have every reason to be satisfied with the impression that my representations have made upon them; for in order to remedy the defect of which I have complained, and render the service of his troops more efficacious in future, he has promised to send his second son, Secundah Jah, with the Minister, Azeem ul Omrah, to command them; and he has given me the strongest assurance through Meer Allum, who lately arrived in camp, that the Minister, with all the intended reinforcements, in which the two Company's battalions in his pay will be included, shall, conformable to my desire, join me before the end of the month of October.

Reduced as Tippoo's resources now are, and diminished and dispirited as his army must be by our repeated success, there can be little doubt of his being desirous for peace, but I have not yet discovered any clear symptoms of his haughty mind being prepared to submit to the terms which the Allies, from a consideration of their future safety and of their right to expect some compensation for their losses and expenses, will think it necessary to impose upon him.

After having been equally unsuccessful with the Peshwa and the Nizam as with myself in frequent attempts during the last three or four months to create jealousies amongst the Confederates by proposing to open separate negotiations with them without admitting his knowledge of the nature of the Confederacy, he at last thought proper to comply with my recommendation to address himself at the same time to the three Powers, and to request permission to send a Vakeel to treat with them collectively.

Permission was accordingly granted, but as the Vakeel preferred claims respecting the forms of his public reception and the mode of opening the negotiation which could not without the greatest impropriety be complied with, and

from which he declared his instructions did not authorise him to recede, it was thought most advisable by Hurry Punt and Meer Allum (who are invested with full powers from their respective Governments), as well as myself, that he should be requested, after having given him a few days for consideration, to return to his master, and he accordingly proceeded to him from Bangalore on the 24th of last month.

We have not yet received any further message from Tippoo, but I think it highly probable that he will soon renew his proposition for opening a negotiation; and should he at any time appear to be seriously disposed to acquiesce in terms of accommodation which a regard for your honour and interests, as well as those of the Allies will render it incumbent on us to demand, the strongest considerations, both public and private, will insure my most cordial exertions to bring this contest to a speedy conclusion.

I must, however, confess that although it may be possible that, in case of his other schemes being unsuccessful, he may see the necessity of submitting to our demands before the Confederate forces shall be completely ready to move again towards his capital, yet I see no good reason to believe that he has any other design at present than that of endeavouring to disunite the Confederates by underhand intrigues amongst them; and I shall certainly therefore not relax in the smallest degree in forwarding the necessary preparations to enable me, as soon as the season will permit, to resume the most vigorous prosecution of offensive operations.

You are so well informed by your own records of the characters and dispositions of our Allies, that I need hardly state to you that in transacting business with people differing so much from ourselves in language, manners, and customs, so unsystematic in their natures, so ignorant of the military science, and so liable to be biassed from the pursuit of a general good by private and selfish views, many difficulties are unavoidably experienced; and I shall only assure you that neither temper nor perseverance shall be wanting on my part to preserve union amongst the different members of the Confederacy, and to draw the utmost exertions that

may be practicable from them for promoting the general prosperity.

I have thought it my duty to give you the above general statement of the occurrences of the last campaign and of our present situation, and before I conclude this letter I must, in justice to the officers and soldiers both of the King's and Company's troops who compose this army, give my public testimony that during the course of a campaign which from a concurrence of circumstances has been singularly arduous, they have manifested patience under fatigue and scarcity, gallantry in action, and a general spirit of zeal for the honour and interests of their country, to an extent which in my opinion has never been exceeded by any troops whatever, and which gives them a just claim to the warmest and most substantial marks of your approbation. . . .

I have, etc.,

CORNWALLIS.

GENERAL ORDERS.—FROM THE ORIGINAL DRAFT IN  
LORD CORNWALLIS'S OWN HANDWRITING.

CAMP BEFORE SERINGAPATAM,  
*February 6, 1792.*

The army to march in three divisions :

*Right—*

General MEDOWS.

36th and 76th Regts.—Lieut.-Colonel NESBITT.

3rd Brigade.—Lieut.-Colonel COCKERELL.

1st Battalion 6th Brigade.

Lieutenant LENNAN's Pioneers.—Engineers.—Scaling ladders.

*Centre—*

Lord CORNWALLIS.

Lieut.-Colonel STUART.

52nd, 71st, and 74th Regts.—Lieut.-Colonel KNOX.

4th Brigade.—Major RUSSELL.

2 Battalions 6th Brigade.—Major LANGLEY.

Lieutenant DOWSE's Pioneers.—Engineers.—Scaling ladders.

*Order of March.**Right—*

Lieut.-Colonel NESBITT.

1 Battalion Company 36th Regt.

Pioneers.

4 European Flank Companies, with scaling ladders.  
36th Regt.

2 Bengal Battalions.

General MEDOWS.

Lieut.-Colonel COCKERELL.

Engineers.

76th Regt.

2 Bengal Battalions.

1 Battalion 6th Brigade.

*Centre—*

Lieut.-Colonel KNOX.

1 Battalion Company 52nd Regt.

Pioneers.

6 European Flank Companies, with scaling ladders.  
52nd Regt.

1 Bengal Battalion.

Lord CORNWALLIS.

Lieut.-Colonel STUART.

Engineers.

71st Regt.

2 Bengal Battalions.

74th Regt.

2 Battalions 6th Brigade.

*Left—*

Lieut.-Colonel BAIRD or Major FRASER.

1 Flank Company 72nd Regt.

1 Flank Company, with scaling ladders.

Pioneers.

1 Battalion 5th Brigade.

Lieut.-Colonel MAXWELL.

72nd Regt.

2 Battalions 5th Brigade.

If the right attack is made to the westward of Sonarpet, the troops of that attack should, after entering the enemy's lines, turn to the left; but if the attack is made to the eastward of Sonarpet, the troops should turn to the right, to dislodge the enemy from all the posts on the left of their position.

The troops of the centre attack, after entering the enemy's lines, should turn to the left. The front divisions, however, of both the right and centre attacks should, after entering, advance nearly to the extent of the depth of the enemy's camp before they turn to either side, in order to make room for those that follow; and such parts of both divisions, as well as of the left division, as the Commanding Officer shall not think it necessary to keep in a compact body, will endeavour to mix with the fugitives, and pass over into the island with them.

Lieutenant Macleod will furnish guides.

EARL CORNWALLIS TO SIR CHARLES OAKELEY, BART.

CAMP NEAR SERINGAPATAM,  
*February 8, 1792.*

SIR,

On the 5th instant I encamped about seven miles to the northward of Seringapatam, from whence I saw that Tippoo had, according to my information, taken a position on the north bank of the river, with its front and flanks covered by a bound hedge and a number of ravines, swamps, and water-courses, and likewise fortified by a chain of strong redoubts full of cannon, as well as by the artillery of the fort and of the works on the island.

It would have cost us a great many men to have attacked this camp in the day, and perhaps the success might not have been quite certain. I determined, therefore, to make the attempt in the night, and for this purpose I marched on the 6th, as soon after sunset as the troops could be formed, in three divisions. The right division, commanded by General Medows, and the centre division, under my immediate direction, were destined for the attack of the enemy's camp, and the division on the left, consisting of four battalions



under Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell, was ordered to attack the works that the enemy were constructing on the heights above the Karegat Pagoda.

The officers commanding the leading corps in the right and centre divisions were directed, after driving the enemy from their camp, to endeavour to pursue them through the river and establish themselves on the island, and it was recommended to Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell to attempt to pass the river, if, after having possessed himself of the heights, he saw that our attack on the camp was successful.

The left and centre divisions were so fortunate as to accomplish completely the objects proposed. Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell gained the heights, and afterwards passed the river, and the first five corps of the centre division crossed over to the island, leaving me in possession of the camp which was standing, and of all the artillery of the enemy's right wing.

The division of the right, by some of those accidents to which all operations in the night must be liable, approached much too near to a very strong detached work which it was not my intention to assault that night, and which must have fallen into our hands without giving us any trouble, if we succeeded in forcing the enemy's camp.

The advanced guard engaged in the attack of this work before they could be prevented by the officers in the front of the column, and the latter, who had been used to carry forts with much facility, did not think it necessary or perhaps creditable to oblige them to desist; but the garrison of this redoubt conducted themselves very differently from those which we had lately met with, and their resistance was so obstinate that it was not carried without costing us several lives and a very considerably delay.

By this time the firing at the centre attack had entirely ceased, and General Medows, concluding from that circumstance that I was in complete possession of the whole of the enemy's camp, and apprehending that a part of his corps might be wanted to support the troops on the island, wished to communicate with me as speedily as possible.

Some guides who undertook to lead his division to join mine by a direct road conducted him to the Karegat Pagoda without his meeting with me, and daylight was too near to admit of his undertaking any further operations.

These untoward circumstances did not deprive us of any of the solid advantages of our victory, for we are in possession of the whole of the enemy's redoubts, of all the ground on the north side of the river, and of great part of the island, but as the force with which I remained in the enemy's camp did not much exceed three battalions, and as I found, from parties that I sent out, that the left wing of Tippoo's army kept their ground all night, I could not bring off any trophies from the field except those that were very near to the spot where our impression was made.

I have not yet been able to ascertain with precision the number of guns that have fallen into our hands, but I understand that of brass and iron it amounts to upwards of sixty of different calibres.

I shall take up my ground to-morrow as near to the chain of redoubts as possible without being exposed to the fire of the fort, and as our posts upon the island are now nearly secured against any attempt of the enemy, I shall soon be ready to proceed with vigour upon the operations of the siege.

It has been hitherto impossible to collect the returns of the killed and wounded, but I have every reason to hope that our loss in Europeans will be under two hundred. I will send a list of the officers that were killed, in order to prevent the anxious alarm of the friends of the survivors.

I am, etc.,

CORNWALLIS.

*General Abstract.*

	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.	Total.
Europeans ...	68	213	21	302
Natives ...	40	168	23	231
General Total	108	381	44	533

Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm,<sup>1</sup> Adjutant-General of the Army, wounded, not included in the above.

<sup>1</sup> Lieut.-Colonel, afterwards Colonel, Henry Malcolm, died March 31, 1834.

## EARL CORNWALLIS TO THE COURT OF DIRECTORS.

CAMP BEFORE SERINGAPATAM,  
*March 4, 1792.*

HONOURABLE SIRS,

I have now the satisfaction to be able to inform your Honourable Court that the war with Tippoo Sultaun is terminated by a peace with that Prince, and on conditions which we trust will secure solid and lasting advantages to the Company and to the British nation.

The multiplicity of arrangements which it was necessary to combine for transporting our military stores and provisions, and for securing future supplies of subsistence for the vast multitudes of soldiers and followers that belong to the Confederate armies, as well as the embarrassment of so many heavy incumbrances with the army, would, even with the most hearty concurrence of all the officers who were intrusted with the principal executive parts of the plan of the campaign, have unavoidably rendered our movement towards the enemy's capital extremely slow; but after the date of my last letter I was further delayed beyond all my calculation in advancing to Seringapatam by the culpable conduct of Purseram Bhow, who, in direct contradiction to his repeated promises, suffered himself to be allured by the hopes of being able to plunder the rich province of Bednore, and with that view marched his army to the westward, instead of complying with my request that he would move back to the eastward to co-operate in the general plan that had been long settled amongst the Confederate Powers for the investiture and reduction of Seringapatam.

A very successful expedition that was made by a large detachment of Tippoo's cavalry for the purpose of relieving the upper fort of Gurramconda so entirely deranged the measures that the Nizam's Minister, Azeem ul Omrah, had taken for the security of that quarter, and after having advanced to the southward of Chintomeny-pet, he was obliged to return with his whole corps to re-establish order in the districts adjoining to Gurramconda, which likewise

gave me some interruption. His zeal, however, for the cause, and his earnest desire to bring the Prince Secunder Jah to the army before it moved forward, called forth his utmost exertions on this occasion, and he returned and joined the other allied forces on the 25th of January.

As three Bombay battalions are attached to Purseram Bhow's army, which is also numerous and active, and has long been in the practice of carrying on separate operations and of securing its own supplies, I had placed my dependence upon that corps for crossing the Caveri to join General Abercromby, and to enable him not only to bring on his heavy artillery from the top of the Ghauts, but also to invest Seringapatam completely on the southern side of the river.

The disappointment, however, that I experienced from the Bhow obliged me to make several alterations in my original plan, though the cheerful readiness shown by Azeem ul Omrah upon his junction at first encouraged me to flatter myself that no very great deviation from it would be necessary.

Immediately upon my ascertaining that Purseram Bhow had no intention to execute the part of the general plan that had been allotted for him, I despatched orders to General Abercromby to place his heavy artillery in a secure post at the top of the Ghauts, and to hold his corps in readiness to move, lightly equipped in every respect, at the shortest notice; and on the day of my arrival in the neighbourhood I sent further instructions to him to march without delay and occupy as strong a position as he could find on the south side of the Eratore ford, at the distance of between 30 and 40 miles from hence, and which had been described as one of the best fords upon the river.

My intention then was to have availed myself of the Minister's disposition to comply with my recommendations, and to have sent him with all the Nizam's troops and the two Madras battalions attached to them, to form a junction with General Abercromby on the south bank of the river, and to have directed according to circumstances, either that

the combined force should proceed without delay to invest the south side of Seringapatam, or that the General should previously send to the top of the Ghaut for his heavy artillery.

More minute inquiries into the internal state of the Nizam's troops obliged me to relinquish that plan, for I found that the Minister's talent for securing regular supplies for the troops under his command fell so far short of his zeal to promote my wishes and the general interests of the Confederacy, that his corps could not be detached even for a few days to any considerable distance from our bazars and our northern communications without exposing it to suffer great distress from want of provisions; and as neither Hurry Punt's health, nor the condition of his army, admitted of his undertaking that service in the room of Azeem ul Omrah, I was subsequently obliged to direct General Abercromby to cross and join me on the north side of the river.

Although all my hopes were at an end of receiving any immediate assistance from Purseram Bhow, and I concluded that our difficulties would be greatly increased by that disappointment, I neither deviated from the execution of the general outlines of the original plan of the campaign, nor felt diffident of ultimate success; but at the same time I stated my sentiments on his conduct in very strong terms, both to himself and to the Court of Poonah, and as the forces under his command were peculiarly well calculated for giving essential aid either in holding the place closely invested, or in making head against any corps which Tippoo might keep in the field for the purpose of intercepting our supplies during the siege, I requested of him to quit the pursuits in which he was engaged and move (late as it was, and different from the plan that had been settled) with the utmost expedition by the route that he had marched last season towards our army.

The Bhow had met with considerable success in his desultory expedition, for by the good conduct of Captain Little, and the gallantry of the three Bombay battalions under his command, he totally defeated, in a thick woody

country in the neighbourhood of Samoga, the corps commanded by the Nabob Riza Ali, which Tippoo had stationed in that quarter for the protection of the Bednore country, and in consequence of that victory he obtained possession of Samoga after a slight resistance, and of all the other posts belonging to the enemy, within a few miles distance from the town of Bednore; and it afterwards appears that although he had reasonable grounds then to flatter himself that the place would soon have fallen into his hands, he came to a sudden resolution to return from thence by rapid marches to join us, which he effected two days after the preliminaries of peace were signed. But whether his determination to return to the southward was owing, as it was reported, to his having received peremptory orders to that effect from Poonah, or to the letters that I had written to him, I do not know, nor have I now thought it worth while to be at much pains to ascertain.

There was in the mean time no intermission in the exertions that were necessary to complete our own preparations, and to enable me to proceed to attack the enemy's army and capital with the Confederate forces under my own immediate direction, and as soon as I could move from the neighbourhood of Hooliadroog I advanced, and after a few easy marches encamped, on the 5th of February, behind the French rocks, at the distance of about seven or eight miles from Seringapatam.

Upon my arrival there I found, conformable to information that I had previously received, that Tippoo, trusting to the strength of his position, appeared to have determined to keep his ground, and as the badness of all the fords near the town, and indeed the security of our northern supplies, put it equally out of my power to attempt to pass the river with the main army and all its stores and heavy artillery, I did not hesitate in resolving to attack him, his removal being an indispensable preliminary to the commencement of the siege of his capital.

In order, therefore, to be enabled to take proper measures for carrying my determination into execution, the afternoon

of the 5th was employed in examining hircarrahs who had been frequently sent to Tippoo's camp to make observations upon it; and on the following morning the whole position was carefully reconnoitred under cover of a strong detachment from the tops of eminences which, though at a considerable distance, commanded a view of it through its whole extent from the right to the left.

It then clearly appeared to have been chosen with great judgment, and fortified with extraordinary care, on a tract of land close to the north bank of the river, and nearly parallel to the island with the heights of the Karigaut Pagoda, almost within the distance of a cannon-shot, on the right, and those of Somarpet and the Ead-gah (a place of Mahomedan worship) on the left; the front not only covered by a bound-hedge and six large redoubts well furnished with cannon, but the approach to it also rendered uncommonly difficult by a number of rice-fields, ravines, and water-courses, with which it was almost in every part intersected; and the whole was within reach and protected either by the guns of the fort, or by batteries and entrenchments that had been constructed on the island.

Under these circumstances it was evident that the event of an attack in daylight might have been doubtful, and that the loss of a great number of our best soldiers would have been certain, whilst at the same time, when he had a retreat for his army so near and so well covered, I could hardly have been sanguine enough to hope that any advantage which it would have been possible to have gained in the day would have been decisive.

I therefore determined to attack him in the night, and without loss of time; and as little use could be expected from our guns in the dark, and the nature of the ground between us and the enemy's camp would have rendered it extremely difficult to convey them, I resolved to march without artillery of any kind; and in such an enterprise neither our own nor the cavalry of the allies could afford any assistance.

Having arranged the plan of attack in the afternoon of

the 6th, and allotted the reserve, consisting of our own cavalry and one European and one native battalion, the camp-guard of the other regiment, and the corps of artillery, the whole under the command of Colonel Duff, for the protection of all our baggage, guns, and stores, nineteen battalions were ordered to be ready to march as soon as it was dark, in three columns: the right column, composed of two European and five native battalions, commanded by Major-General Medows; the centre column, composed of three European and five battalions, under my own immediate direction; and the left column, composed of one European and three native battalions, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell. Lieutenant-Colonels Cockerell and Nesbitt were attached to the right; Lieutenant-Colonels Stuart and Knox to the centre; and Lieutenant-Colonel Baird to the left column. A small detachment of the corps of artillery was ordered to march in the rear of each of the columns, to be in readiness to make use of any of the enemy's guns that might fall into our hands.

The commanding nature of the ground on which the Ead-gah stands had induced Tippoo to construct a redoubt upon that eminence, but though within the bound-hedge, as it was not less than half a mile distant from the front of his army, and I had received certain information that the work was uncommonly strong, and as I likewise conceived that, from its advanced situation it would soon be evacuated if we should succeed in routing the army, it was not my intention that it should be attacked.

Directions were accordingly given that the right column should penetrate the enemy's line about half a mile to the eastward of the Ead-gah; the centre column a few hundred yards to the eastward of the road which leads to the ford at the Dowlat Baug; and the column under Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell was destined at the same time to attack the Kari-gaut Pagoda and some works that the enemy had very lately begun to construct on a high hill that overlooks the pagoda at a small distance from it.

The officers leading the advanced divisions of the right



and centre columns were instructed to endeavour, after penetrating the enemy's line, to pass the river, if possible, with the fugitives, and obtain possession of the batteries upon the island ; and Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell was also directed, after possessing himself of the objects of his attack, to do his utmost to enter the island by the Karigaut Ford, when he should observe that the attacks upon the enemy's army had been successful.

A considerable time was required to arrange the troops from an extensive line of encampment in the order which had been prescribed for the respective columns ; but the whole were ready to march forward about nine, and soon after eleven o'clock the centre and left columns reached the first points of their destination, and immediately attacked with the most complete success.

At the centre attack, the fire of the enemy's infantry and artillery was heavy for a short time, but our loss there was not great ; and the head of the column, according to instructions, after carrying a large redoubt near which Tippoo's own tent was pitched, and upon which he principally depended for the protection of his right wing, mixed with the fugitives and crossed over to the island with them, with the greatest spirit and rapidity.

Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell having in the meantime driven the enemy from the posts that he was ordered to attack, with very little loss on his side, descended the hill with three battalions of the left column upon observing the success of the centre attack ; and upon finding it impracticable to force the Karigaut Ford under the heavy fire of the enemy's entrenchments on the opposite side, he moved with the utmost expedition to the ford at which part of the centre column was passing under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Stuart, and crossed over to the island with him.

The European flank companies of the centre column had in the meantime crossed at another ford, and by the united exertions of the whole we immediately became masters and retained possession of the Sultaun's principal garden, and

the whole of the island to the eastward of the Pettah of Shahar Ganjam.

The right column, by a concurrence of several of those untoward circumstances to which attacks in the night must ever be liable, was delayed and disappointed in executing the part of the general arrangement that had been assigned to it.

The route of its intended march was across a space of country which, though apparently open, is cut by several difficult ravines, with a deep water-course running through it, the channel of which winds so much that the column was obliged to pass it two or three times in endeavouring to march straight to the point of attack; and the guides who conducted it having by that means, and from their having been instructed to avoid the great roads, lost the proper direction of the march, unluckily carried the head of the column close to the Ead-gah redoubt, and before the mistake could be rectified the ardour of those that led engaged them in the assault.

Great pains had not only been taken in constructing the redoubt and in providing it with cannon, but Tippoo had also entrusted the defence of it to a large body of the choice of his infantry.

The struggle was therefore violent, and for a short time almost doubtful; for the first efforts of our troops, though gallant to the utmost degree, were not successful, and it was not carried at last without much effusion of blood on both sides.

General Medows immediately occupied the post with a strong detachment, and being within the bound-hedge, moved towards the point of the enemy's position at which it had been originally intended that he should penetrate; but the firing having long before ceased at the attacks of the other two columns, he concluded that the defeat of the enemy had been completed; and finding great difficulty from swamps and ravines in marching within the bound-hedge, he returned to the outside of it, and marched along its front to the Karigaut Pagoda, where he expected to be in

immediate communication with the other divisions of the army.

In the meantime, however, part of the enemy's centre and left having a little recovered from the panic with which they had been struck by our success against their right, made a disposition and advanced about an hour before the day began to break, with a considerable degree of order and resolution, to attack the troops that occupied the ground at which we had first penetrated; but having luckily retained with myself near four battalions for the security of that point, the enemy were beaten and driven back after a sharp conflict; and day approaching fast, and the ground on which we stood being commanded by the guns of the fort, it was necessary to move from thence soon after, leaving a detachment in possession of the redoubt on the enemy's right, which had been carried in the beginning of the action.

Great and repeated exertions were made by Tippoo during the succeeding day to retake that redoubt, which the vicinity of the fort and the excessive fatigue of the troops rendered it difficult for us to succour; but all efforts proving fruitless, he desisted from the attempt in the afternoon; and in the course of the following night he evacuated all the other redoubts in his possession on the north side of the river.

Our loss in killed and wounded, though not great in number, must, from the value of the gallant officers and soldiers who fell, be estimated as very considerable: that of the enemy it has been impossible to ascertain with precision. It has, however, appeared in general, that his cavalry suffered considerably, and that his infantry, either in the action or by desertion since that day, has been so much diminished that he never seemed to have considered the remainder as more than sufficient for the defence of Seringapatam. And besides other trophies, seventy-seven pieces of cannon, thirty-five of which are brass, of different calibres, from nine to two-pounders, fell into our hands.

Exhausted as the troops were, nothing further could be

done on the 7th than to take some steps for securing our posts upon the island, which I had occupied with eight battalions; and in order to provide against all disappointment in the co-operation of the Bombay array, as well as that it might be as little exposed as possible to be harassed on the march by Tippoo's cavalry, I despatched in the afternoon of that day the instructions that I have already mentioned to General Abercromby, to cross and join me with the utmost expedition on the north side of the river. And having two days after sent our own cavalry, a large body of the Nizam's and the Maratta horse, and one of the Company's battalions in the Nizam's pay, to meet him on the march, a corps of Tippoo's cavalry that had crossed the river for the purpose was completely foiled in an attempt to disturb him, and he joined us on the 15th of February.

All the necessary measures were also taken in the meantime to quicken the preparations for commencing the siege, and to counterbalance a multitude of obstacles which the bareness of the country on the north side and many circumstances in the situation of the place prescribed to us, we were lucky enough to find ample materials for fascines and gabions in Tippoo's extensive gardens on the island.

Some of the most capable of the Frenchmen and other foreigners who had long been in Tippoo's service came over to us in the course of a few days after the action, and it soon appeared from their accounts as well as from the result of our own reconnoitring, that all the descriptions that we had hitherto obtained of the situation and of the works of the fort, and even the remarks that had been made upon them last season by ourselves, were extremely incorrect and imperfect. Instead, therefore, of attacking it as I had at first proposed, on the island side, where, besides some outworks, it is defended by two deep ditches and two strong walls with bastions and cavaliers constructed with great care and well furnished with heavy artillery, I resolved, after the most mature consideration, and notwithstanding the difficulties that were to be apprehended in

establishing communications to the breaches across the north branch of the river, to carry on the attack against the space which includes the Sultan Bastion and the Western Cavalier; and although the weakness of the wall, the shallowness of the ditch, and the incomplete state of part of the glacis in that quarter would, perhaps, have appeared to me to afford sufficient grounds for that resolution, I was still further encouraged to adopt it by having ascertained that it would at this season of the year be practicable to throw the greatest part of the water of the Caveri out of the two branches that form the island of Seringapatam, by repairing and improving a dam that goes across the river a few miles above the island, which seems to be an ancient work, and constructed, like several others on the Caveri, for the purpose of forcing part of the current into canals that have been cut with great skill and labour, to furnish water for the cultivation of a long tract of land on both sides of the river.

Having determined upon the above plan of attack, it became necessary to strengthen further our posts upon the island, in order that I might be able, without endangering their safety, to withdraw some part of the force that had hitherto been sent upon that duty, to assist in carrying on the siege.

Strong working parties, in addition to those that were constantly occupied in making fascines and gabions, were accordingly employed to render those posts secure; and this object being accomplished, six battalions were allotted as a stationary guard of the island, and for furnishing such working parties as might be necessary to afford a certain and ample supply of fascines and gabions for the works.

Our arrangements of every other kind being likewise completed, the trenches were opened on the night of the 18th February, and on the following morning General Abercromby was ordered to cross the river with nine battalions about two miles above the ford to occupy an advantageous and strong position at the distance of about random cannon-shot from the works, and he was instructed

to make immediate preparations for carrying on approaches, and for constructing batteries to assist in destroying the enemy's works, and to enfilade the whole front that was to be attacked.

During the time that the military operations that I have described were carrying on with unremitting vigour, Tippoo, sensible of the danger of his situation, had made several overtures to treat with the Confederates; and a few days after the action, a negotiation was opened by deputies from all the parties, which, after various discussions, terminated the contest.

Before the Confederate armies moved from the neighbourhood of Outtradroog, letters were received from Tippoo, in which he repeated his request to be permitted to send Vakeels to treat; but with the warm approbation and concurrence of Hurry Punt and Azeem ul Omrah, I told him that I should insist upon his executing the capitulation of Coimbatoor as a preliminary to all negotiation.

In answer to my letter he denied that any capitulation for that garrison had taken place between Lieut. Chalmers and Kumarwad-dien Khan; and as it was far from my wish to drive him to despair by treating so shameless an assertion in the manner it deserved, and by that means shutting the door against all treaty, I replied, with the same concurrence of the Confederates, that it depended entirely upon himself to state this matter in a clear and uncontrovertible light by communicating again with Kumarwad-died Khan upon the subject, and by a personal examination of Lieutenants Chalmers and Nash, who were still in his possession; and that if I had been misinformed he could, without the least prejudice to his interests, as I should engage that neither of the gentlemen should serve against him during the war, easily convince me of it by sending out Lieutenants Chalmers and Nash, or one of them, to declare the truth.

Of this proposition he took no notice till after the defeat of his army; but in the afternoon of the 8th he sent to camp Lieutenants Chalmers and Nash and the few other Europeans that had been taken with them at Coimbatoor, ac-

accompanied with letters requesting again that Vakeels might be received from him to open a negotiation for peace.

Although Tippoo's flagrant breach of the capitulation was clearly established by the personal testimony of Lieutenants Chalmers and Nash, yet knowing as I did how important it was for the interests of the Company and the British nation that no time should be unnecessarily lost in securing a safe and honourable peace, and seeing likewise that a perseverance in requiring a literal compliance with my first demand would amount to a virtual refusal to enter into any negotiation, as I had learnt from Lieutenant Chalmers that the garrison of Coimbatore was so much dispersed that it was not in Tippoo's power to execute the capitulation immediately, I judged it advisable to relax upon that point. And accordingly, after consulting with our allies, I contented myself with saying that, as he had shown a disposition to make atonement for the breach of the capitulation, I should not, on account of the present critical state of affairs, insist upon its being fully executed previous to all negotiation, and that he was at liberty to send Vakeels to a spot that was pointed out, where deputies from the Confederate Powers would meet them to hear their propositions.

In consequence of this permission he appointed Gholam Ali Khan, who had been at the head of his embassy to Constantinople, and Ali Riza, his Vakeels; and they arrived and encamped at the place that had been fixed upon for them on the afternoon of the 13th.

Conceiving it to be very improbable that Tippoo would authorize his Vakeels to make any specific propositions to us, I thought it would be proper, in the event of their declining to offer any terms, that our Deputies should be prepared to state those on which the Allies would agree to desist from further hostilities.

The Deputies having accordingly met the Vakeels on the morning of the 14th, and the latter having, as I expected, declined to make any offer, a demand was made on our part of the cession of country to the extent of three crores of rupees of revenue, and of eight crores of rupees in ready

money; to which the Vakeels replied by protesting the total inability of their master to comply with the demand, but added that they would immediately go to the fort and lay it before him, and return as soon as possible with his own answer to it.

The Vakeels accordingly returned next morning, and after many references to Tippoo upon the modified conditions that were proposed at several different meetings by the Deputies of the Allies, of which it is unnecessary to trouble you with a detail, the preliminary articles of peace, of which I have now the honour to inclose a copy, were at last finally settled and agreed to by Tippoo on the night of the 23rd of February; and at Tippoo's earnest request all hostilities ceased, without waiting for the delivery of the hostages, on the following forenoon.

It was said that the want of punctuality in the delivery of the hostages was occasioned by some domestic difficulties in Tippoo's own family, as well as by it requiring some time to arrange their attendants, and to settle the ceremonials of their reception in camp; but on the 26th he sent out his second and third sons to be delivered into my hands.

All the points that came under discussion in the course of the negotiation were regularly communicated to Hurry Punt and to Azeem ul Omrah, and their sentiments requested upon them; and it will no doubt give you pleasure to hear that in every measure that was determined upon respecting this important negotiation, there has uniformly been the most cordial concurrence and union in our opinions.

Indeed, the general confidence that has been shown on the occasion in our good faith cannot fail of being highly gratifying to you; for the Deputies that were named by Hurry Punt and Azeem ul Omrah came to me previous to their meeting with Tippoo's Vakeels to declare that they were instructed to agree to any terms of peace that should appear to me to be suitable to the interests of the three States, and no murmur or discontent has been expressed at the hostages remaining, according to the desire of their father, in my particular custody.



I did not expect that Tippoo's nature would suddenly change, and that he would act with openness and candour in executing the articles of the treaty. I was therefore in no degree surprised at finding, when his revenue accounts were produced, an evident design to practise every art to impose upon us by exaggerating the value of the districts that lie contiguous to the territories of the Allies, and under-rating those in the interior parts of his dominions, and which consequently are not to be ceded.

He has, however, in the meantime paid above one crore of rupees, which has been divided equally amongst the three Powers; and I persuade myself that, by a firm perseverance in the demand that we have made of the production of original papers for our inspection, we shall before long be able to ascertain the amount of his revenue with sufficient accuracy for regulating the extent of the districts that are to be ceded by him, according to the terms of the treaty; and the armies will not only remain in this neighbourhood, but even the guard of the trenches will continue to mount regularly until all these arrangements shall be completed.

I have in many instances derived great advantage from Sir John Kennaway's services in acting as a channel of intercourse between me and Azeem ul Omrah; but it has proved peculiarly fortunate that his attendance upon the Minister put it in my power, at this important juncture, to avail myself, by naming him as my deputy, of his address and conciliatory manners in conducting the negotiations to so happy an issue; and it is very satisfactory to me that I can equally depend upon the most able assistance from him, both in obtaining from Tippoo the execution of the preliminaries and in framing the articles of the definitive treaty of peace.

The territory that the Company will acquire by the peace will be considerable in point of revenue, though, from the wide difference in several statements of Tippoo's whole revenues that have been produced, I cannot yet form a judgment of the amount; but important as an addition of revenue may be, I consider it of infinitely more consequence to the

interests of the Company and the nation than almost any sum whatever, that the overgrown power of Tippoo, from which we have at different times suffered so much, and which has so long threatened your possessions on both coasts with total destruction, has been reduced by the event of this war within bounds which will deprive him of the power, and perhaps of the inclination, to disturb us for many years to come; whilst at the same time I hope that our acquisitions by this peace will give so much additional strength and compactness to the frontiers of our possessions, in both the Carnatic and on the coast of Malabar, as to render it extremely difficult for any Power above the Ghauts to invade them.

The firmness and gallantry that has been displayed by the troops that compose this army, under the uncommon hardships and difficulties to which they have so often been exposed during the course of this war, reflects the highest honour upon themselves as soldiers, and gives them the strongest claim to the applause and favour of the Company and the nation; and the zeal and alacrity with which my instructions have been uniformly obeyed, as well as the personal attachment that has been shown to me on several trying occasions by the officers and soldiers in general, will ever be remembered by me with the warmest gratitude.

Although circumstances prevented General Abercromby from sharing in some of the active scenes in which the principal army was engaged, I am not the less sensible of his ardent desire to promote the public good, or of his ability in executing the services that were allotted to him; and no words can express the sense that I shall entertain throughout life of the ability and refined generosity and friendship with which General Medows has invariably given me his support and assistance.

I have thought it necessary, as a reward to the soldiers for the cheerfulness with which they have performed so many various duties, and as some compensation to the officers for the extraordinary expenses to which they have been exposed, to order a gratuity equal to six months' batta (about 22 lacs

of rupees) to be issued from the money that has been paid by Tippoo to all the troops that have been employed upon this service, which I hope will meet with your approbation ; and as General Abercromby's situation would not justify him in following General Medows' and my own example in declining to accept any share in prize-money or gratuity, and from his receiving no batta, there is no rule upon that ground for regulating his position, I have judged it most equitable to direct that he shall receive half a sixteenth of the amount of the whole sum that shall be issued to the army ; being the proportion of prize-money which he is entitled to draw according to the principles of division which we understand to be established for the Flag Officers of His Majesty's Navy, and which has been adopted for the General Officers of this army.

This despatch will be delivered to you by Captain Madan, my aide-de-camp, whom I beg leave to recommend to your notice ; and as he had obtained my leave to go from Bengal to join the army in the Carnatic at the breaking out of the war, and has since that time served constantly in the field, he will be able to explain the details of many transactions of which you may be desirous to receive particular information.

Captain Kyd has my directions to prepare a sketch of the ground on which the action was fought, and it will be transmitted to your Honourable Court with this despatch.

I have, etc.,

CORNWALLIS.

EARL CORNWALLIS TO THE COURT OF DIRECTORS.

CAMP IN MYSORE,

*April 5, 1792.*

HONOURABLE SIRS,

I have the honour to enclose a copy of the definitive treaty which has been concluded with Tippoo Sultaun, conformable to the tenor and spirit of the preliminary articles which I transmitted to you by the last despatch, with a copy of the schedule which was annexed to the treaty, containing

the names of the districts that have been ceded by Tippoo to the Allies.

You were informed by my letter dated the 4th ultimo that being aware that Tippoo would practise every possible art to evade a strict execution of his engagements, I had determined to maintain the posts that we occupied before Seringapatam, until every arrangement for carrying the preliminary articles of peace into full effect could be completed; and I had soon reason to believe that none of my precautions were superfluous.

After sending out by some of his revenue officers some statements of his revenues that were evidently fabricated and incorrect, and which consequently were rejected, he at last declared that, owing to his having lost a great number of his papers in places that had been taken by the Allies, or in his camp on the night of the action, it was not in his power to give a regular authenticated account of the revenues of the different districts of his country, though he persevered in asserting that after deducting the expenses of collection they did not much exceed two crore.

A statement therefore was formed from the best materials in the possession of the Allies, which rated his dominions at two crores and sixty lacks of net revenue, and upon which it was proposed that the division of his country should be made according to the terms of the preliminary articles; but upon its being produced he positively objected to its correctness, offering however, after some discussion, to allow the division to take place upon the ground that his net revenue amounted to something above two crores and thirty-seven lacks, to which, with the entire concurrence of Hurry Punt and Azeem ul Omrah, I judged it advisable to give my assent.

Upon the adjustment of this indispensable preliminary point, further difficulties were started by his objecting with great warmth to cede some of the districts which had been included by the Allies in the selection of their respective portions, and above all others his repugnance to relinquish the Coorga country, which I was determined to obtain for

the Company as being necessary to form a secure barrier for our new possessions on the coast of Malabar against every Power above the Ghauts, appeared at one time to be almost insurmountable.

At this stage of the negotiation the Allies were not only in possession of his two sons as hostages, but also of above eleven hundred thousand pounds of the sum that he had agreed to pay in ready money, which I should have considered as sufficient pledges from any other man for the performance of the whole of the preliminary articles, but faithless and violent as Tippoo's character was known to be, I judged it incumbent upon me to be prepared to support by force, if it should prove necessary, the rights that we had acquired by the preliminaries; and with that view I requested, in addition to several other measures, that Purseram Bhow would cross the Caveri and join General Abercromby, in order that we might be ready to act with efficacy and without loss of time against Seringapatam if a renewal of hostilities should become unavoidable, resolving at the same time that the armies should not quit the positions that they occupied until the articles of the definitive treaty should be arranged and actually signed.

As any material interruption, and still more a total breach in the negotiation, would have been attended with great inconvenience in our affairs, I was relieved from much anxiety when Tippoo, upon further reflection, withdrew all his objections, and consented on the 16th ultimo to sign the definitive treaty; and the first payment of one crore and sixty-five lacks of rupees being also completed in a few days, Purseram Bhow repassed the river, and after evacuating the trenches and our posts upon the island, all the Confederate forces began to move from Seringapatam on the 26th ultimo. The orders for the mutual cession of forts and districts conformable to the treaty having also been previously interchanged, I trust that in the course of a few weeks Tippoo will be in possession of the dominions that are left to him, and that the armies of the Allies will have returned within the new boundaries of their respective countries.

It must no doubt be highly gratifying to you that a war into which we were forced by every consideration of good faith and sound policy has not only terminated in the reduction of the strength of a neighbour of great power and of the most inordinate ambition, but also in securing acquisitions to ourselves which, exclusive of their inestimable value in point of situation, add considerably to your revenues, and promise to open sources of commerce in pepper, cardamums, teak, sandal-wood, etc., that may be looked upon as of great importance both to the Company and to the nation.

By the statement of Tippoo's revenues upon which it was finally agreed by all parties that his country should be divided, according to the terms of the preliminary articles, the Company's portion amounted to something above thirty-nine lacks and a half of rupees of net revenue; and by an inspection of the General Map you will readily perceive that although, in order to reduce the Company's share to that sum I was obliged to relinquish a few small districts on the top of the Ghauts that properly belonged to the Barra-maul, but which are not necessary for the security of our frontier, I have availed myself of our right of selection, by demanding and obtaining for the Company's portion countries that are both strong in themselves, and peculiarly well calculated to form a barrier to your ancient possessions.

The districts ceded to us on the coast of Malabar consist of the whole of the tract of country below the Ghauts laying between Travancore and the Kaway River, which is our northern boundary, and they are so fortunately situated that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for Tippoo or any future sovereign of Mysore to disturb them.

Palacatcherry commands the only road by which an army can approach them from the Carnatic side. The only passes that lead into them from the Mysore country—viz., the Tambercherry and Pondicherrum Passes, are, from their belonging to our tributaries, in reality in our own possession; and the northern frontier is, from the ruggedness of the country, and from its being intersected with a number of

deep ravines and several considerable rivers, exceedingly inaccessible.

Dindigul constitutes a substantial protection to the southern provinces, and by the acquisition of the Barra-maul, and of the country which, though composed of several different districts, is commonly called the Salem country, which gives us the command of all the passes of the Ghauts to the northward of the Caveri, we have obtained an effectual barrier to the Carnatic against all future invasions of the westward; and exclusive of the principal forts of Sankerydroog, Namcool, Ottoor, Khistnagerry, and Ryacotta, which no power in India could take from us, and which an invading army could not pass without hazarding the loss of its supplies, there are a number of smaller forts in those districts that, in case of a temporary irruption of a corps of cavalry, would be capable of affording great protection to the persons and property of the inhabitants.

Had the extent of our share of the cessions made by Tippoo admitted of it, I should have had great satisfaction in adding the country of Coimbatore to the Company's other possessions, principally for the purpose of depriving the Mysore power of all footing below the Ghauts on the Carnatic side; but the disappointment is of the less consequence as it is a defenceless open country which, in case of a future rupture, nothing less than Tippoo's whole force could attempt to defend against us, and from which he could not, without the greatest difficulty and danger, venture to invade the Carnatic.

A pass called the Caveriporam Pass is marked upon some of the sketches of that part of the country, but as it does not appear that Tippoo or his father ever brought guns down that pass, there is no good reason to suppose that it is at present, or that it could easily be made practicable for an army; and having lately had occasion to order a detachment to ascend the Guzzlehutty Pass, we have had an opportunity to ascertain that it is, of all the passes leading into the Carnatic, by much the most steep and difficult.

The nature, therefore, of the pass by which his artillery and stores must come from Mysore, would prove no inconsiderable obstacle to Tippoo in forming a design against the Carnatic from that quarter; and as I trust that he could neither take Dindigul, Trichinopoly, Tanjore, Sankerydroog, or Namcool, which are our frontier forts on that side, I look upon it to be almost impossible that he or any of his successors will venture to pass the Coleroon with an army into the centre of the Carnatic, leaving their supplies and communications of all kinds exposed to be attacked and interrupted by the garrisons of the places that I have mentioned, supported by bodies of troops that might be stationed for the purpose under their cover and protection.

I am convinced that Sir Charles Oakeley and General Abercromby will select the most capable and trustworthy of your servants to manage the newly-acquired territories; and General Abercromby agreed so perfectly with me, that it was of the utmost importance for the national character and for the interest of the Company that we should commence our government of the countries on the coast of Malabar upon a good plan, that it was concerted between us that it would be most prudent, before we divided them finally into districts, to appoint Commissioners to make a temporary settlement with all the chiefs for this season, and then to proceed upon an active and earnest investigation of the amount of revenue that those acquisitions are capable of paying, the extent of the different articles of commerce, the natures of the tenures of the Rajahs or other chiefs, and the classes and numbers of the inhabitants, in order that the Supreme Government may be enabled from their report, and the observations and suggestions of the Government of Bombay, to propose a system for the future management of that country which may include rules for the conduct of the revenue and commercial departments, and above all for a strict and impartial administration of justice; and as many of the Bengal servants have had great experience in conducting the internal business



of extensive Indian Provinces, it is my intention to depute two of those in whom I can place particular confidence, as soon as the change of the monsoon will render it practicable, to join two Commissioners that General Abercromby will at my recommendation appoint, immediately to commence upon the undertaking that I have described, and to assist in collecting the necessary materials, and in framing the report that will be expected from them.

The Malabar coast has been in a state of great distraction and confusion since the time that Tippoo's troops and the officers of this Government were driven out of it, the two great and inimical classes of the people, the Nairs and the Moplas, being almost at open war with each other, and great dissensions about boundaries and revived old claims prevailing amongst the Nair Rajahs themselves; but as General Abercromby will, immediately upon descending the Ghauts, detach troops into the different districts, I hope that I shall soon hear that tranquillity has been restored, and the Company's authority completely established throughout all those countries. . . .

It must give you very great satisfaction to hear that there neither is at present, nor will be at the arrival of the troops in quarters, one single rupee of arrears due to them, or to any of the public departments, and that the accounts of all descriptions of military expenditure are so closely brought up that I can at present see no good reason to prevent the three Presidencies from making up, in the course of the next six months at farthest, distinct statements of the whole of the extraordinary expenses that have been incurred by the war. . . .

Purseram Bhow, with the corps under his immediate command, proceeded directly from Seringapatam towards his own country, and Hurry Punt and the Nizam's son and Minister will separate from this army in a few days. General Abercromby commenced his march to the coast of Malabar on the 26th ultimo, and was on the same day joined by Captain Little's detachment, which had only

been engaged to serve with the Maratta army during the Maratta war.

I have, etc.,  
CORNWALLIS.

P.S.—Tippoo's country having been divided according to its revenue, and not its extent, it will be obvious to you that the Nizam and Marattas could not, in the highly cultivated and fertile countries in which their portions were claimed, receive the same number of square miles that fell to the Company, as in our portion the Coorga country is included, which pays only a small and limited tribute, and there are considerable tracts of hilly and barren ground in several of our other districts; and for similar reasons, the division left to Tippoo greatly exceeds in the number of square miles the whole of that which was ceded to the Allies, as the rugged and unproductive countries of Mysore and Chittledroog constituted the principal portion of the dominions that remain in his possession.

MARQUIS CORNWALLIS TO SIR C. W. MALET, BART.

FORT WILLIAM,  
*August 20, 1792.*

SIR,

Although there seems at present no reason to apprehend that Tippoo will for a considerable period be disposed to come to a rupture with any of the members of the late Confederacy, yet as it is of great importance for preserving our reputation for good faith, as well as for the general interests of the British nation, that the grounds should be clearly explained on which the Allies can, in consequence of the 13th and 15th articles of the treaties of alliance that were formed at the commencement of the war, demand assistance and support from each other against any hostile attempt of their late common enemy, I look upon it as proper and desirable that the treaty of guarantee, which they are bound to enter into, should with all convenient despatch

be put into a distinct form, and I therefore wish that you should take an early opportunity to confer fully with the Ministers upon this subject.

Every consideration will induce me to examine and discuss any propositions that may be made by him in the most amicable manner, but the greatest care must be taken that no vague or ambiguous expression shall be admitted into this new instrument, and that the stipulations shall in no shape go beyond the spirit of the article upon which they will be founded.

I shall defer entering much into detail until you can inform me of Nana's sentiments and expectations, but it is proper that you should be acquainted with my ideas of the general principles which should form the basis of the agreement.

The Allies are bound to guarantee against Tippoo the territories that each of them might possess at the conclusion of the war, but it must always be adverted to that the stipulation is merely defensive, and cannot operate unless Tippoo should attack either of them without just provocation.

It must therefore be clearly expressed in the treaty of guarantee that in case any difference should arise between one of the latter and Tippoo, the other Allies are to have a right to expect that the nature and circumstances of such difference shall be fully communicated to them in order that they may give their opinion and advice, and endeavour to settle it by a temperate negotiation, and that they shall not be considered as bound to take up arms in his favour until they are convinced that he has justice on his side, and all means of conciliation shall have proved fruitless.

Should a rupture become unavoidable, the interest and safety of the contracting Powers will be so evidently and deeply involved in the event that it would be highly injudicious in them to limit their exertions in endeavouring to bring it to a speedy and honourable conclusion, and it must consequently be stipulated that the whole force of each State is to be employed for that purpose.

The distress and danger of the party that may be attacked being entitled to the greatest attention from the other members of the Alliance, it ought to be understood and settled that, whilst no time should be lost in preparing their whole force to take the field, every immediate assistance that may be practicable should be afforded with such troops as may be in actual readiness for service.

The above are the fair principles for the treaty of guarantee, and to render any further treaty unnecessary in the event that Tippoo's conduct should again force us into hostilities during the existence of the guarantee, it may be proper to insert in it that a general plan of operations for the Confederate forces is to be concerted as soon as possible after a rupture becomes certain, and that conformable to the terms of the Alliance that was made at the commencement of last war, were if any of the parties shall enter into separate negotiations, but that (under the exclusion of unreasonable objections) all measures for concluding a peace shall be conducted with the knowledge and approbation of the whole.<sup>1</sup>

You will communicate to Sir J. Kennaway the particulars and result of your conferences upon this point, that you may act in entire conformity with each other.

I am, etc.,  
CORNWALLIS.

<sup>1</sup> This letter is copied from a transcript made by a native scribe. Many errors arose from these scribes being ignorant of the English language, and sometimes, as in the present instance, it is impossible to correct them.

## PART II

### LAND ADMINISTRATION

#### MINUTE OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

*September 18, 1789.*

The great ability displayed in Mr. Shore's Minute which introduced the propositions for the settlement, the uncommon knowledge which he has manifested of every part of the revenue system of this country, the liberality and fairness of his arguments and clearness of his style, give me an opportunity which my personal esteem and regard for him and the obligation I owe him as a public man for his powerful assistance in every branch of the business of this Government, must ever render peculiarly gratifying to me the duty of recording my highest respects for his talents; my warmest sense of his public-spirited principles which, in an impaired state of health, could alone have supported him in executing a work of such extraordinary labour; and lastly, my general approbation of the greatest part of his plan.

I am confident, however, that Mr. Shore, from his natural candour, as well as the public at large, will readily admit that, deeply interested as I must feel myself in the future prosperity of this country, it would be unjustifiable in me to take any steps of real importance upon the suggestion even of the most capable adviser without seriously weighing it in my own mind, and endeavouring to reconcile the propriety of it to my own conviction.

Impressed with these sentiments, I am called upon by a sense of indispensable duty to declare that I cannot bring

myself to agree with Mr. Shore in the alteration which he now proposes to make in the Second Resolution of leaving out the notification to the land-holders that if the settlement shall be approved by the Court of Directors it will become permanent, and no further alteration of the jumma take place at the expiration of the ten years.

When the Court of Directors determined to retain in their own hands the right of confirming or annulling the settlement at the expiration of a given term, they undoubtedly acted with becoming wisdom and caution.

The power of making a perpetual irrevocable settlement of a great empire without being subject to the revision of the controlling authority at home would, in my opinion, have been too great to delegate to any distant Government. I cannot, however, believe that they would have held out the flattering hopes of a permanent settlement, which alone, in my judgment, can make the country flourish and secure happiness to the body of inhabitants, unless they had been predetermined to confirm the perpetuity, if they found that their servants here had not failed in their duty, or betrayed the important trust that had been reposed in them. Nothing, I am persuaded, but our expressing doubts and fears can make them hesitate; and as I have a clear conviction in my own mind of the utility of the system, I should think it a duty I owe to them, to my country, and to humanity, to recommend it most earnestly to the Court of Directors to lose no time in declaring the permanency of the settlement, provided they discover no material objection or error, and not to postpone for ten years the commencement of the prosperity and solid improvement of the country.

Mr. Shore has most ably and, in my opinion, most successfully, in his Minute delivered in June last, argued in favour of the right of the Zemindars to the property of the soil. But if the value of permanency is to be withdrawn from the settlement now in agitation, of what avail will the power of his arguments be to the Zemindars, for whose right he has contended? They are now to have their property in farm for a lease of ten years, provided they will

pay as good rent for it, and this property is then to be again assessed at whatever rent the Government of this country may at that time think proper to impose. In any part of the world where the value of property is known, would not such a concession of a right of property in the soil be called a cruel mockery?

In a country where the landlord has a permanent property in the soil it will be worth his while to encourage his tenants who hold his farm in lease to improve that property; at any rate he will make such an agreement with them as will prevent their destroying it. But when the lord of the soil himself, the rightful owner of the land, is only to become the farmer for a lease of ten years, and if he is then to be exposed to the demand of a new rent, which may perhaps be dictated by ignorance or rapacity, what hopes can there be, I will not say of improvement, but of preventing desolation? Will it not be to his interest, during the early part of that term, to extract from the estate every possible advantage for himself; and if any future hopes of a permanent settlement are then held out, to exhibit his lands at the end of it in a state of ruin?

Although, however, I am not only of opinion that the Zemindars have the best right, but from being persuaded that nothing could be so ruinous to the public interest as that the land should be retained as the property of Government, I am also convinced that, failing the claim of right of the Zemindars, it would be necessary for the public good to grant a right of property in the soil to them, or to persons of their descriptions. I think it unnecessary to enter into any discussion of the grounds upon which their right appears to be founded.

It is the most effectual mode for promoting the general improvement of the country, which I look upon as the important object for our present consideration.

I may safely assert that one-third of the Company's territory in Hindostan is now a jungle inhabited only by wild beasts. Will a ten years' lease induce any proprietor to clear away that jungle, and encourage the ryots to come

and cultivate his lands, when at the end of that lease he must either submit to be taxed *ad libitum* for their newly cultivated land, or lose all hopes of deriving any benefit from his labour, for which perhaps by that time he will hardly be repayed?

I must own that it is clear to my mind that a much more advantageous tenure will be necessary to incite the inhabitants of this country to make those exertions which can alone effect any substantial improvement.

The habit which the zemindars have fallen into of subsisting by annual expedients has originated, not in any constitutional imperfection in the people themselves, but in the fluctuating measures of Government; and I cannot therefore admit that a period of ten years will be considered by the generality of people as a term nearly equal in estimate to perpetuity.

By the prudent landholders it will not, whatever it may be by proprietors of a contrary description. It would be unwise, therefore, to deny the former the benefit of a permanent system because the mismanagement of the latter will not allow them to derive the same advantage from it.

It is for the interest of the State that the landed property should fall into the hands of the most frugal and thrifty class of people, who will improve their lands and protect the ryots, and thereby promote the general prosperity of the country.

If there are men who will not follow this line of conduct when an opportunity is afforded them by the enactment of good laws, it surely is not consistent with justice, policy, or humanity, to say that the sooner their bad management obliges them to part with their property to the more industrious, the better for the State.

It is immaterial to Government what individual possesses the land provided he cultivates it, protects the ryots, and pays the public revenue.

The short-sighted policy of having recourse to annual expedients can only be corrected by allowing those who adopt it to suffer the consequences of it, leaving to them at



the same time the power of obviating them by pursuing the opposite line of conduct.

Mr. Shore has stated but two positive objections to the latter part of the Second Resolution. The first is that if, after the notification that the settlement, if approved of by the Court of Directors, will be declared permanent, the Court of Directors should not declare the permanency, the confidence of the natives in general will be shaken, and those who relied on the confirmation will be disappointed, and conclude that it was meant to deceive them.

I can only say, in answer to this objection, that I cannot believe any people to be so unreasonable as to accuse Government of a breach of faith, and an intention to deceive them, for not doing what Government in express terms assure them it is not in their power to promise to do, as it must depend on the approbation of their superiors.

The only effect of the notification will, in my opinion, be to encourage the landholder to offer—all that Government asks or wishes for—a fair rent, lest by endeavouring to withhold what he knows he ought in justice to pay he should forget that greatest of all blessings, a real property, and to stimulate him to more exertion in his cultivation.

But supposing even for a moment that the declaration would be received in the sense apprehended, and that the zemindars were to act under a conviction that it was well founded, let us examine the nature of these acts, and whether the consequences of them would be such as to shake the confidence of the natives, or to operate otherwise in any respect but advantageously to themselves. The acts alluded to must of course be such as are calculated to promote the improvement of the country, as the assisting of ryots with money, the refraining from exactions, and the forgoing small temporary advantages for future permanent profits. Such acts must ultimately redound to the benefit of the zemindars, and ought to be performed by them, were the settlement intended to be concluded for ten years only, or even to be made annually.

But this provident conduct cannot be expected from

them so long as they have any grounds for apprehending that their land, when improved, may be committed to the management of the officers of Government, or made over to a farmer.

Should the zemindars, therefore, misconstrue the meaning of the declaration, and act in consequence of that misapprehension, they would find themselves enriched by the error; and this result, instead of tending to shake their confidence in Government, might teach them a useful lesson, from which they would profit under any system of management. I should further observe on this argument that it is founded on a supposition that when the zemindars are convinced that the demand of Government on their lands is fixed they will adopt measures for the improvement of them which they will not have recourse to so long as that demand is liable to occasional variation, and consequently strongly points out the expediency of a permanent settlement, and declaring to the landholders as soon as possible that the conclusion of a permanent settlement with them is the object of the Legislature in England, as soon as it can be effected upon fair and equitable terms.

The second objection is, the doubt of its being expedient that the permanency should be declared.

Mr. Shore says we cannot pronounce absolutely upon the success of our measures without experience. I must ask, What are these measures, on the success of which there can be no doubt? or what is the experience that is wanting, and what, by delaying a permanent settlement for a few years, would probably be improved?

There is nothing new in this plan, except the great advantages which are given to the zemindars, talookdars, and ryots, on one side, and the additional security which the Company has against losses by balances from the value of the land, which is to be sold to make them good, being greatly increased, on the other. By what probable, I may say even possible, means is such a plan to fail?

I understand the word permanency to extend to the

jumma only, and not to the details of the settlement; for many regulations will certainly be hereafter necessary for the further security of the ryots in particular, and even of those talookdars, who, to my concern, must still remain in some degree of dependence on the zemindars; but these can only be made by Government occasionally, as abuses occur; and I will venture to assert that either now or ten years hence, or at any given period, it is impossible for human wisdom and foresight to form any plan that will not require such attention and regulation, and I must add that, if such a thing was possible, I do not believe it will be easy to find a man more capable of doing it than Mr. Shore.

I cannot, however, admit that such regulations can in any degree affect the rights which it is now proposed to confirm to the zemindars, for I never will allow that in any country Government can be said to invade the rights of a subject when they only require, for the benefit of the State, that he shall accept of a reasonable equivalent for the surrender of a real or supposed right which in his hands is detrimental to the general interest of the public, or when they prevent his committing cruel oppressions upon his neighbours, or upon his own dependents.

The Court of Directors have given us a general idea of the amount of the land revenue from Bengal and Bahar with which they will be satisfied. If we honestly and faithfully make a settlement equal, and even beyond their expectations, in point of revenue, and at the same time calculated in its outlines to promote the prosperity, happiness, and wealth of their subjects, what reason can we have to apprehend that they will not declare its permanency?

From the constitution of our establishments in this country it almost amounts to an impossibility that at any period the same Government, the same Boards, or the same collectors, should continue for near the space of ten years; upon what grounds, then, are the Court of Directors to look for more knowledge and useful experience at the expiration of that term and under all contingencies that may be

reasonably expected to occur? I cannot avoid declaring my firmest conviction that if those provinces are let upon lease for that period only, they will find at the end of it a ruined and impoverished country, and that more difficulties will be experienced than ever this Government have had to encounter.

In regard to the fourth Resolution respecting gunges, bazars, etc., Mr. Shore has proposed that for the present they shall be placed under the management of the collectors. I will not at this time enter at large upon that question, for I feel very sensible how important it is that the orders for the Bahar settlement should be transmitted to the collectors of that district without losing a minute's time unnecessarily, and I shall soon have an opportunity of delivering my sentiments fully upon it when the Bengal settlement comes under our consideration.

I must, however, observe that of the six references which are proposed to be made to the collectors, I cannot see the smallest use in any of them except the last, which goes to the expediency of the measure.

As to the question of right, I cannot conceive that any Government in their senses would ever have delegated our authorised right to any of their subjects to impose arbitrary taxes on the internal commerce of the country. It certainly has been an abuse that has crept in through the negligence of the Mogul governors, who were careless and ignorant of all matters of trade, or, what is more probable, connivance of the Mussulman aumil, who tolerated the extortion of the zemindar, that he might again plunder him in his turn.

But be that as it may, the right has been too long established or tolerated to allow a just Government to take it away without indemnifying the proprietor from any loss. And I never heard that, in the most free State, if an individual possessed a right that was incompatible with public welfare, the Legislature made any scruple of taking it from him, provided they gave him a fair equivalent. The case of the late Duke of Athol, who a few years ago parted

very unwillingly with the sovereignty of the Isle of Man, appears to me to be exactly in point.

I agree with Mr. Shore there would be a degree of absurdity in Governments taking into their own hands the gunges, etc., which are annexed to zemindary rights, and leaving the same abuses existing in those which belong to jaghire and altumgha possessions; but instead of leaving the former on that account, I should most undoubtedly take away the latter, securing the proprietors a liberal and ample equivalent for all such duties as were not raised in absolute and direct violation of the orders of Government.

There are, however, several articles in what are called the Sayer collections with which Government has no occasion to interfere, and which may very well be left in the hands of the proprietors.

EARL CORNWALLIS TO LORD SOUTHAMPTON.

CALCUTTA,

*November 7, 1789.*

MY DEAR LORD,

I received, by the hands of Mr. Colebrooke, your letter dated the 20th of March, with the enclosed note from the Prince of Wales, and I can assure you that I read it with the greatest concern, as it made me apprehend, what would be very painful to me, that I should appear backward and disinclined to exercise any commands that His Royal Highness might think proper to honour me with.

I thought it had been long since universally known in England that no man can hold an office in this country who is not in the service of the East India Company; and I asked Mr. Colebrooke how he could undertake such a voyage with his family without making some inquiries about the country to which he was coming, adding that any person at all conversant with the affairs of India would have informed him that it was utterly out of my power to give him anything,

and that no recommendation, however great and powerful, could be of any material use to him.

You will easily judge of my surprise when he told me he had not been so imprudent as I had imagined, that he had consulted what he conceived to be the best opinions, and that it was Sir John Macpherson who advised him to come to India, and who assured him that there was no doubt that with such a recommendation as he brought I should provide for him.

If this is true, which I own I have some difficulty in believing, Sir John must have forgot everything that passed upon my first arrival in the country, when in his presence I tied up my hands against all the modes that used to be practised for providing for persons who were not in the Company's service, such as riding contracts, getting monopolies in Oude, extorting money for them from the Vizier, etc.

If I was to create offices, or extra-offices, which is a term I do not very well understand, I should not only disgrace myself, and undo everything I have been doing since I landed in Bengal, but I should render a very short-lived service to the person for whom they were created, for if I was to forget my duty, and betray the trust which is reposed in me, the Court of Directors would not forget theirs, and they would undoubtedly annul such appointments the instant they heard of them.

I must beg of you, my dear Lord, to state what I have said, in the strongest but most respectful terms to the Prince of Wales, who has so much goodness that I am sure for my sake he would not wish me to do an act that would degrade my character; and for the sake of his country he would not desire that I should set an example that would prove ruinous to the public interests, and lay a foundation for the renewal of those abuses that had well-nigh upset our Indian Empire.

I am, etc.,

CORNWALLIS.

## EARL CORNWALLIS TO LORD RAWDON.

CALCUTTA,

*December 2, 1789.*

MY DEAR LORD,

I received your letters of the 2nd and 3rd of April, by the hands of Messrs. Purling and Burroughes.<sup>1</sup>

The former is a gentlemanlike good sort of man, without much ability or experience in the most essential part of the business of this country; I shall, however, endeavour to find some appointment for him in the course of this winter, though perhaps it may not be quite equal to the expectations he had formed from his high standing in the service. To Mr. Burroughes I can probably do little more than show the most cordial civility, in which you may be assured I shall not be deficient.

I am much obliged to you for your friendly hint about William Burke.<sup>2</sup> Although I may perhaps suffer a little in the opinion of the great personage to whom you allude, for my predilection for what I think great qualities and eminent services to his country in Mr. Pitt, I should on all other points most earnestly wish to give every proof of the most sincere attachment and anxious desire to do what I should have every reason to believe would be agreeable to him.

I have ever since I have been in India treated William Burke with the greatest personal attention; and I have done

<sup>1</sup> Mr., afterwards Sir William Burroughes, Bart., so created December 1, 1804; died June 1, 1839. Married, June 19, 1782, Letitia, daughter of William Newburgh, Esq., of Ballyhaise. Advocate-General, and afterwards (1806) a puisne judge in Calcutta. M.P. for Enniskillen from December, 1802, to February, 1806; Colchester from March, 1817, to June, 1818; and then for Taunton to May, 1819, when he was turned out on petition.

<sup>2</sup> William Burke, cousin of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, died 1798. M.P. for Great Bedwin from June, 1766, to June, 1774. Under-Secretary to Field-Marshal Conway from 1766 to January, 1768. Went to Madras in 1777 with despatches to Lord Pigot; returned home as agent to the Raja of Tanjore. Went again to India, was made Paymaster-General, and remained there till 1793. He is commemorated in 'Retaliation' as—

'Here lies honest William, whose heart was a mint,  
While the owner ne'er knew half the good that was in't.'

little favours, such as Ensigncies in the King's service, etc., to his friends. But it is impossible for me to serve him essentially, that is, put large sums of money into his pocket, without a gross violation of my public duty, and doing acts for which I should deserve to be impeached.

He has himself suggested to me two modes of serving him, which I will explain to you. The first is, that he should receive money here, and be allowed to manage the remittances for the payment of the King's troops at Madras and Bombay.

I found him in possession of such a remittance to Madras when I first arrived, which was given to him by Macpherson (in order to pay his court to Edmund Burke), and fixed at the scandalous exchange of 410 Arcot rupees for 100 pagodas, by what he, Macpherson, called a committee of respectable merchants, consisting of William Burke himself (the Company's military Paymaster-General)—an intimate friend of Burke's, and a principal proprietor in the bank through which he remitted his money—and poor —, who I believe to this day scarcely knows the difference of value between a rupee and a shilling.

Without my entering, however, into the merits of such an exchange or such a committee, or without my stating that there is a positive order from the Court of Directors against a separate remittance for the payment of the King's troops, which was sent from England before it was known there that I had abolished it, you will, I am sure, easily see how objectionable the principle is of establishing distinct funds, or rather treasuries, which are not subordinate to the respective Governments, and of course not applicable to any extraordinary exigency that might occur; and it must likewise be obvious to you that as the rate of exchange between this place and the other Presidencies depends on the export of grain and other commercial circumstances, it must be liable to great fluctuation; and that consequently, if the terms allowed to a person who is to remit annually between two and three hundred thousand pounds were not very favourable to him, he would be full as likely to be ruined by



it as to make a fortune; and that if they were decidedly advantageous to him, they would not only affect the Company's interest in that particular instance, but would very materially operate to their prejudice in the remittance of much larger sums, which we are obliged to send every year to Madras and Bombay for other purposes.

The second proposition was so extraordinary that I had great difficulty to persuade myself that he was in earnest when he made it; for he wished me to give him about eight hundred thousand pounds in Company's paper, bearing an interest of 8 per cent., that he might remit, with no loss to himself as you may suppose, to the Pay Office in England, what he called the balance due from the Company to the Crown for the King's troops serving in India over and above the subsistence which had been paid to them in this country.

It was in vain that I represented that such an addition to our certificate debt would depreciate our paper, and utterly ruin our credit; that to my knowledge a part of this balance was actually paid at home; that the Court of Directors would settle the account finally with the Pay Office; that it was our business to transfer, instead of increasing our debts; and lastly, that I was ordered not to pay any balance here to the King's Paymaster, unless the state of our treasury would admit of it. He paid very little attention to the preceding argument, and in answer to the last he said he did not understand how we could deny that the state of our treasury did admit of our making payments, when we had the power of issuing as many certificates as we pleased.

I have entered into this detail, trusting that if you should hear the subject mentioned before the Prince, you will be so kind as to give some explanation of it; and I can assure you that the sending William Burke to India was a most unnecessary job, and that our having any King's paymaster in this country is a great embarrassment to us, and a material hindrance to the public business.

You will find by the public accounts, that everything

remains quiet in this part of the world ; that our bonds and certificates both bear a premium, and that the interest of the latter is reduced to 6 per cent.

It would be too extensive a field for a letter, to enter into an account of the interior business of this Government ; but though I have not time to give you the true edition, I must caution you against receiving erroneous information upon that subject ; and as it is possible you may see a good deal of Macpherson, I think it right to tell you that he is not esteemed here to be perfectly correct in his narrations, and I would therefore not have you take everything he says for gospel.

I am, my dear Lord, whether Pittite or Foxite, with very sincere esteem and regard, your most faithful and affectionate friend,

CORNWALLIS.

#### MINUTE OF GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

*February 10, 1790.*

I have considered Mr. Shore's minutes on the proposed Settlement of the Revenue, which were recorded on the proceedings of the 18th of September and 21st December last, with all the attention which the importance of the subject deserves, and which is due to the opinions of a man who is so distinguished for his knowledge of the revenue system of this country, and for whose public-spirited principles and general character I have the highest esteem.

After having experienced so much advantage from the able and almost uniform support that I have received from Mr. Shore during a period of near three years, it would have been particularly gratifying to me if we could have avoided to record different opinions at the moment of our separation ; but a regard to the due discharge of public duty must supersede all other considerations ; and I have at least the satisfaction to be certain that no private motives have influence with either of us ; and that a sense of our duty alone has occasioned the few exceptions that have arisen to that general concurrence which there will

appear to have been in our sentiments on almost all important points relating to the public business.

The interests of the nation, as well as the Company, and the happiness and prosperity of our subjects in this country, are deeply concerned in the points on which we differ; and as the public good is our only object, I am persuaded that it is equally our wish that the final decision may be such as will most effectually promote it.

Mr. Shore, in his propositions for making the Bahar settlement, objected to our notifying to the land-holders the intention of the Court of Directors to declare the decennial settlement permanent and unalterable, provided that it meets with their approbation; and in his last two Minutes he goes further, and endeavours to prove that a permanent assessment of the lands of these provinces would at any time be unadvisable. He also contends that the taking into the hands of Government the collection of all internal duties on commerce, and allowing the Zemindars and others by whom these duties have been hitherto levied a deduction equal to the amount which they now realize from them, will not be productive of the expected advantages to the public at large; and that it is moreover an unjustifiable invasion of private property.

Had I entertained a doubt of the expediency of fixing the demand of Government upon the lands, I should certainly have thought it my duty to withhold the notification of the intention of the Court of Directors which I have recommended; but after the most mature and deliberate consideration of Mr. Shore's reasoning, being still firmly persuaded that a fixed and unalterable assessment of the land-rents was best calculated to promote the substantial interests of the Company and of the British nation, as well as the happiness and prosperity of the inhabitants of our Indian territories; and being also convinced that such a notification would render the proprietors of land anxious to have the management of their own estates, and in many instances induce them to come forward with more fair and liberal offers at the period of making the new settlement; and at

the same time, that even a disappointment of their expectations would be the cause of no real injury to them, or place them in a worse situation than they were before such hopes were held out to them, it became my indispensable duty to propose that the intentions of the Court of Directors should be published.

The notification has been accordingly made in the several collectorships of Bahar, and the collectorship of Midnapore in Orissa, the final orders for the settlement of which have been issued; and the same reasons will induce me to recommend its being published throughout Bengal.

The accompanying extracts from the correspondence of the collector of Shahabad, in the province of Bahar, with the Board of Revenue will prove that my expectations regarding the effect of this notification were well founded (Appendix, No. 1).

I now come to the two remaining points on which I have differed with Mr. Shore, and the final decision regarding which must rest with the Honourable Court of Directors; viz., the expediency of declaring the decennial settlement permanent, and appointing officers on the part of Government to collect the internal duties on commerce.

The following appear to me to be Mr. Shore's principal objections to a permanent assessment: That we do not possess a sufficient knowledge of the actual collections made from the several districts to enable us to distribute the assessment upon them with the requisite equality: that the demands of the Zemindars upon the talookdars and ryots are undefined; and even if we did possess a competent knowledge of the above points, there are peculiar circumstances attending this country which must ever render it bad policy in the Government to fix their demand upon the lands.

I shall now offer such remarks as occur to me on the facts and arguments adduced by Mr. Shore in support of the above objections:

Mr. Shore observes that we profess to take from the Zemindars ninth-tenths of their receipts; and under these

circumstances, allowing for the common variations in the state of society, in the improvement and in the decline of agriculture, and admitting the probable alterations in the value of silver, it is certain that the constancy of the assessment may be of great inconvenience, and even ruinous to many of the contributors; and in this case there will be a necessity of some future alterations, which must always take place to the disadvantage of Government if the assessment be now declared fixed for ever.

Were there any grounds for supposing that a system which secures to the land-holder the possession of his lands and the profits arising from the improvement of them will occasion a decline in agriculture, then might we apprehend that a permanent assessment would, in a progress of time, bear hard upon the contributors; but reason and experience justify the contrary supposition: in which case, a fixed assessment must be favourable to the contributors, because their resources will gradually increase, whereas the demand of Government will continue the same.

Equally favourable to the contributors is the probable alteration in the value of silver; for there is little doubt that it will continue to fall, as it has done for centuries past, in proportion as the quantity drawn from the mines and thrown into the general circulation increases. If this be admitted, the assessment will become gradually lighter, because as the value of silver diminishes the land-holder will be able, upon an average, to procure the quantity which he may engage to pay annually to Government with a proportionably smaller part of the produce of his lands than he can at present.

The circumstance of the country being occasionally liable to drought and inundation, which Mr. Shore adduces as an argument against a permanent assessment, appears to me strongly in favour of it. The losses arising from the drought and inundation are partial and temporary; the crops are damaged or destroyed; the land is neither swept away by inundation nor rendered barren by drought, but in the ensuing year produces crops as plentiful as those

which it would have yielded had it not been visited by those calamities.

Now, if Mr. Shore's calculation of the proportion which the Zemindars in general receive for the produce of their lands be accurate, it is obvious that every temporary loss must fall upon Government; for so long as we profess to leave the Zemindars no more than that proportion, and claim a right to appropriate the excess to the public use, from what funds are they to make these losses good? But when the demand of Government is fixed, an opportunity is afforded to the land-holder of increasing his profits by the improvement of his lands; and we may reasonably expect that he will provide for occasional losses from the profits of favourable seasons.

The necessity, therefore, of granting remissions to the landholders for temporary losses will diminish in proportion as the produce of the lands increases and exceeds the demand of government.

But let us suppose that hereafter it should be found necessary to grant remissions in districts which may suffer from drought or inundation, this is no argument against a permanent assessment; for under the present system of variable assessment we are frequently obliged to grant considerable deductions on these accounts, and there is no prospect of our being able to discontinue them so long as the country is assessed at its full value, and no more is left to the landholder than is barely sufficient for his subsistence, and for defraying the charges of collecting the rents from his lands.

There is this further advantage to be expected from a fixed assessment in a country subject to drought and inundation, that it affords a strong inducement to the landholder to exert himself to repair as speedily as possible the damages which his lands may have sustained from these calamities; for it is to be expected that when the public demand upon his land is limited to a specific sum, he will employ every means in his power to render them capable of again paying that sum, and as large a surplus as possible

for his own use. His ability to raise money to make these exertions will be proportionably increased by the additional value which the limitation of the public demand will stamp upon his landed property: the reverse of this is to be expected when the public assessment is subject to unlimited increase.

I am of opinion, therefore, that there is no reason to apprehend a greater deficiency in the public revenues from drought and inundation, when the assessment is fixed, than we have hitherto sustained under the system of variable assessments; on the contrary, that we have very sufficient grounds for supposing that the necessity for granting remissions on these accounts will become gradually less. It further appears to me that the practice of heaping up the public revenue by charging occasionally the improved estate of one landholder with the deficiencies in the public revenue assessed upon the lands of his neighbour is both unjust and impolitic; and that until that practice is discontinued, both the landholders and their under-tenants and ryots will in general remain in a state of impoverishment, and that landed property will continue at its present depreciated value.

Mr. Shore observes that the *Zemindars* are ignorant of their true interests and of all that relates to their estates; that the detail of business with their tenants is irregular and confused, exhibiting an intricate scene of collusion opposed to exaction, and of unlicensed demand substituted for methodised claims; that the rules by which the rents are demanded from the ryots are numerous, arbitrary, and indefinite; that the officers of Government possessing local control are imperfectly acquainted with them, whilst their superiors, further removed from the detail, have still less information; that the rights of the *talookdars*<sup>1</sup> dependent on the *Zemindars*, as well as the ryots, are imperfectly

<sup>1</sup> 'Talook' (A. 'tazalluk'), the being dependent; dependence, a dependency, a district, the revenues of which are under the management of a *talookdar* (*q.v.*), and are generally accounted for to the *Zemindar* under whose jurisdiction it happens to be included, but sometimes paid immediately to Government.

understood and defined; that in common cases we often want sufficient data and experience to enable us to decide, with justice and policy, upon the claims to exemption from taxes; and that a decision erroneously made may be followed by one or other of these consequences—a diminution of the revenues of Government, or a confirmation of oppressive exaction; that no one is so sanguine as to expect that the perpetuation of the Zemindarry assessment will at once provide a remedy for these evils; that time must be allowed for the growth of confidence and the acquisition of knowledge; that we know from experience what the Zemindars are, and that he is not inclined, in opposition to that experience, to suppose that they will at once assume new principles of action, and become economical landlords and prudent trustees of the public interests.

With regard to the ignorance and incapacity of the Zemindars, admitting these defects do exist in that class of people to the extent supposed, I have already given it as my opinion that they are to be attributed greatly to the system of collecting the public revenue from their lands which has long prevailed in this country. To keep them in a state of tutelage, and to prohibit them from borrowing money or disposing of their lands without the knowledge of Government, as we do at present, with a view to prevent them suffering the consequences of their profligacy and incapacity, will perpetuate these defects. If laws are enacted which secure to them the fruits of industry and economy, and at the same time leave them to experience the consequence of idleness and extravagance, they must either render themselves capable of transacting their own business or their necessities will oblige them to dispose of their lands to others who will cultivate and improve them. This I conceive to be the only effectual mode which this or any other Government could adopt to render the proprietors of the lands economical landlords and prudent trustees of the public interests.

I must here observe, however, that the charge of incapacity



can be applied only to the proprietors of the larger Zemindaries. The proprietors of the smaller Zemindaries, and talooks in general, conduct their own business, and I make no doubt would improve their lands were they exempted from the authority of the Zemindars, and allowed to pay their revenue immediately to the public treasuries of the collectors.

Admitting the detail of business between the Zemindars and their under-tenants and ryots to be in the intricate state described by Mr. Shore, does it not prove that the various attempts hitherto made by successive administrations to simplify this intricacy have been defective in principle, and consequently establish the necessity of having recourse to other measures for that purpose? We have found that the numerous prohibitory orders against the levying of new taxes, accompanied with threats of fine and punishment for the disobedience of them, have proved ineffectual; and, indeed, how could it be expected that whilst the Government were increasing their demands upon the Zemindars that they in their turn would not oppress the ryots; or that a farmer whose interest extends little further than to the crops on the ground would not endeavour to exact, by every means in his power, as large a sum as possible over and above the amount of his engagements with the public.

If the officers of Government possessing local control are imperfectly acquainted with the rules by which the rents are demanded from the ryots, and their superiors farther removed from the detail have still less information of them, at what period are we to hope that Government and its officers will obtain a more perfect knowledge of them? The collectors have now been three years acting under positive instructions to obtain the necessary information for concluding a permanent settlement. They have transmitted their reports, and if the information contained in them, and the numerous discussions on the same points recorded on the proceedings of former administrations are insufficient for us to act upon, at what period, and from whom, are we to expect to procure more perfect materials? Most of the collectors who have

furnished the last reports are now upon the spot, and are the persons best qualified for carrying into execution the system which we may adopt. It is to be supposed that they have communicated all the information which they possessed, and no further lights are therefore to be expected from them. Shall we act upon this information, or shall we wait for other collectors and fresh reports; or shall we calmly sit down discouraged by the difficulties which are supposed to exist, and leave the revenue affairs of this country in the singular state of confusion in which they are represented by Mr. Shore?

In order to simplify the demand of the landholder upon the ryots, or cultivator of the soil, we must begin with fixing the demand of Government upon the former; this done, I have little doubt but that the land-holders will without difficulty be made to grant pottahs<sup>1</sup> to the ryots upon the principles proposed by Mr. Shore in his propositions for the Bengal settlement. The value of the produce of the land is well known to the proprietor or his officers, and to the ryot who cultivates it, and is a standard which can always be reverted to by both parties for fixing equitable rates.

Mr. Shore, in his minute prefixed to his propositions for the Bengal settlement, has furnished the most satisfactory arguments to prove the incompetency of the officers of the Government to enter into this detail with any prospect of success. He observes, 'That it would be endless to attempt the subordinate variations in the tenures or conditions of the ryots; that it is evident, in a country where discretion has so long been the measure of exaction, where the qualities of the soil and the nature of the produce suggest the rates of the rents; where the standard of measuring the land varies, and where endless and often contradictory customs exist in the same district and village, the task must be nearly impossible; that the collector of Rajeshahy observes upon the subject, that the infinite varieties of soil, and the further

<sup>1</sup> 'Pottah' (Hind. and other vernaculars, 'pattā,' etc.), a document specifying the conditions on which lands are held; a lease or other documents securing rights in house or land property ('Hobson-Jobson,' p. 729).

variations of value from local circumstances are absolutely beyond the investigation, or almost comprehension, not merely of a collector, but of any man who has not made it the business of his life.'

It is evident, therefore, that the only mode of remedying these evils which is likely to be attended with success is to establish such rules as shall oblige the proprietors of the soil, and their ryots, who alone possess the requisite information for the purpose, to come to a fair adjustment of the rates to be paid for the different kinds of lands or produce in their respective districts. Mr. Shore's proposition that the rents of the ryots, by whatever rule or custom they may be demanded, shall be specific as to their amount—that the land-holders shall be obliged, within a certain time, to grant pottahs or writings to their ryots, in which this amount shall be inserted, and that no ryot shall be liable to pay more than the sum actually specified in his pottah, if duly enforced by the collectors—will soon obviate the objection to a fixed assessment founded upon the undefined state of the demands of the land-holders upon the ryots.

When a spirit of improvement is diffused throughout the country, the ryots will find a further security in the competition of the land-holders to add to the number of their tenants.

It is no objection to the perpetuation of the *Zemindarry* assessment that it will not at once provide a remedy for those evils; it is sufficient if it operates progressively to that end.

Mr. Shore observes that we have experience in what *Zemindars* are; but the experience of what they are, or have been, under one system, is by no means the proper criterion to determine what they would be under the influence of another, founded upon very different principles. We have no experience of what the *Zemindars* would be under the system which I recommended to be adopted.

I agree with Mr. Shore that some interference on the part of Government is undoubtedly necessary for effecting an adjustment of the demands of the *Zemindars* upon the ryots;

nor do I conceive that the former will take alarm at the reservation of this right of interference when convinced that Government can have no interest in exercising it but for the purpose of public justice. Were the Government itself to be a party to the cause, they might have some grounds for apprehending the result of its decisions.

Mr. Shore observes that this interference is inconsistent with proprietary right; that it is an encroachment upon it to prohibit a landlord from imposing taxes upon his tenants; for it is saying to him that he shall not raise the rents of his estates; and that if the land is the Zemindar's it will only be partially his property whilst we prescribe the quantum which he is to collect, or the mode by which the adjustment is to take place between the parties concerned.

If Mr. Shore means that after having declared the Zemindar proprietor of the soil, in order to be consistent we have no right to prevent his imposing new abwabs,<sup>1</sup> or taxes on the lands in cultivation, I must differ with him in opinion, unless we suppose the ryots to be absolute slaves of the Zemindars: every begah<sup>2</sup> of land possessed by them must have been cultivated under an express or implied agreement that a certain sum should be paid by each begah of produce, and no more. Every abwab, or tax, imposed by the Zemindar over and above that sum is not only a breach of that agreement, but a direct violation of the established laws of the country. The cultivator, therefore, has in such case an undoubted right to apply to Government for protection of his property; and Government is at all times bound to afford him redress. I do not hesitate, therefore, to

<sup>1</sup> 'Abwab' (A. 'abivab,' plural of 'bab,' a gate, door, or way), items of taxation, cesses, imposts, taxes. This term is particularly used to distinguish the taxes imposed subsequently to the establishment of the 'assul,' or original standard rent, in the nature of additions thereto. In many places they had been consolidated with the 'assul,' a new standard assumed as the basis of succeeding impositions. Many were levied on the Zemindars as the price of forbearance, on the part of Government, from detailed investigations into the profits, or actual receipts, from the lands according to 'hastubood' (*vide* 'assul,' 'fouzdarry,' 'abwabm,' and 'hastabood').

<sup>2</sup> 'Bega,' a land measure, equal in Bengal to about the third part of an acre, but varying in different provinces.

give it as my opinion that the Zemindars neither now nor ever could possess a right to impose taxes or abwabs upon the ryots ; and if from confusions which prevailed towards the close of the Mogul government, or neglect or want of information since we have had possession of the country, new abwabs have been imposed by the Zemindars or farmers, that Government has an undoubted right to abolish such as are oppressive and have never been confirmed by a competent authority, and to establish such regulations as may prevent the practice of like abuses in future.

Neither is the privilege which the ryots in many parts of Bengal enjoy of holding possession of the spots of land which they cultivate, so long as they pay the revenue assessed upon them, by any means incompatible with the proprietary rights of the Zemindars. Whoever cultivates the land, the Zemindars can receive no more than the established rent, which in most places is fully equal to what the cultivator can afford to pay. To permit him to dispossess one cultivator for the sole purpose of giving the land to another would be vesting him with a power to commit a wanton act of oppression, from which he could derive no benefit. The practice which prevailed under the Mogul government, of uniting many districts into one Zemindarry, and thereby subjecting a large body of people to the control of one principal Zemindar, rendered some restriction of this nature absolutely necessary. The Zemindar, however, may sell the land, and the cultivators must pay the rent to the purchaser.

Neither is prohibiting the land-holder to impose new abwabs or taxes on the lands in cultivation tantamount to saying to him that he shall not raise the rents of his estates. The rents of an estate are not to be raised by the imposition of new abwabs or taxes on every begah of land in cultivation ; on the contrary, they will in the end be lowered by such impositions ; for when the rate of assessment becomes so oppressive as not to leave the ryot a sufficient share of produce for the maintenance of his family and the expenses of cultivation, he must at length desert the land. No

Zemindar claims a right to impose new taxes on the land in cultivation ; although it is obvious that they have clandestinely levied them when pressed to answer demands upon themselves ; and that these taxes have, from various causes, been perpetuated to the ultimate detriment of the proprietor who imposed them.

The rents of an estate can only be raised by inducing the ryots to cultivate the more valuable articles of produce and to clear the extensive tracts of waste land which are to be found in almost any Zemindarry in Bengal. It requires no local knowledge of the revenues of this country to decide whether fixing the assessment, or leaving it liable to future increase at the discretion of Government or its officers, will afford the greatest encouragement to the land-holder to have recourse to these means for the improvement of his estate.

In support of the opinion which I expressed upon former occasions respecting the large proportion of waste land in the Company's territories, I have annexed some extracts from the correspondence of the collector in the Dacca Province, etc. ; and whoever will take the trouble to consult the public proceedings, will find there are many districts, both in Bengal and Behar, which are not better cultivated than those alluded to in letters of the above-mentioned collectors.

It does not appear to me that the regulations for the new settlement confirm all existing taxes if, upon enquiry, they shall appear unauthorised and of recent imposition ; nor that the Zemindars will be entitled to deductions upon the abolition of them.

With regard to the rates at which landed property transferred by public sale in liquidation of arrears, and it may be added, by private sale or gift, are to be assessed, I conceive that the new proprietor has a right to collect no more than what his predecessor was legally entitled to, for the act of transfer certainly gives no sanction to illegal impositions. I trust, however, that the due inforcement of the regulations for obliging the Zemindars to grant pottahs to their ryots, as proposed by Mr. Shore, will soon remove this objection to

a permanent settlement. For whoever becomes a proprietor of land after these pottahs have been issued will succeed to the tenure under the condition, and with the knowledge, that these pottahs are to be the rules by which the rents are to be collected from the ryots.

With respect to the talookdars,<sup>1</sup> I could have wished that they had been separated entirely from the authority of the Zemindars, and that they had been allowed to remit the public revenue assessed upon their lands immediately to the officers of Government instead of paying it through the Zemindar to whose jurisdiction they are subjected. The last clause in the 16th article of Mr. Shore's propositions which direct that the lands of the talookdars shall be separated from the authority of the Zemindars, and their rents be paid immediately to Government in the event of the Zemindars being convicted of demanding more for them than they ought to pay, will afford them some security from oppression.

When the demand of Government upon the Zemindars is fixed, they can have no plea for levying an increase upon the talookdars, for I conceive the talookdars in general to have the same property in the soil as the Zemindars, and that the former are to be considered as proprietors of lesser portions of land, paying their revenues to Government through the medium of a larger proprietor, instead of remitting them immediately to the public treasury. The pernicious consequences which must result from affording to one individual an opportunity of raising the public revenue assessed upon the lands of another at his own discretion and for his own advantage, are evident; and on this account I was desirous that all proprietors of land, whether Zemindars, talookdars, or choudries,<sup>2</sup> should pay their rents immediately to the European collector of the district or other

<sup>1</sup> Talookdars, the holders of a 'talook.' Talookdars are petty Zemindars, some of whom pay their rent on account for the collections they make from the ryots through a superior Zemindar and other direct government.

<sup>2</sup> Chowdry (H. 'chaudhare,' Ben. 'chaudhare,' a Hindu term, probably from the Sanskrit, implying one who holds a fourth), a permanent superintendent and receiver of the land revenue under the Hindu system.

officer of Government, and be subject to the same general laws.

The number of names upon the rent-roll will add little to the business of the collector of the district provided that the sum to be paid by each proprietor of land is fixed.

In support of this opinion I have annexed some extracts from the Proceedings of the Committee of Circuit, the members of which must have been well acquainted with the customs and practices of Mogul government.

These extracts afford convincing proof of the proprietary rights of the inferior Zemindars and talookdars, and that their being made to pay their rent through the superior Zemindar of the district was solely for the convenience of the Government, which found it less difficult to collect the rents from one principal Zemindar than from a number of petty proprietors.

They further prove that the Zemindars who sold their lands to raise money for the liquidation of the public balances disposed of all the rights which they possessed in them as individuals, and that whatever authority they might exercise over them after the sale must have been virtually delegated to them by the Government and not derived from themselves; and consequently that, in separating such talookdars from the jurisdiction of the Zemindars we should not have infringed the rights of the latter, but only deviated from a practice of the Mogul Government, from which that administration itself frequently departed, and whose conduct in cases of this nature should not, I conceive, be made the rule of ours when found to be inconsistent with the good of the community.

The temporary reduction of the tribute of the Rajah of Benares, adduced by Mr. Shore to prove that the internal arrangements which we may find it necessary to make after fixing the jumma payable by each Zemindar, may hereafter oblige us to grant remission, and thereby diminish the public revenues, does not appear to me a case in point.

The revenue received from Benares was at once raised from 22 to 40 lacks of rupees. The Rajah being incapable



of transacting his own affairs, the management of them was vested in a naib or deputy, whose rapacity and maladministration, together with that of his officers, occasioned a general decline in the cultivation of the country, and consequently diminished its resources. The late reform of the customs and internal duties gave rise to a further temporary diminution of them.

The above are the principal causes which have occasioned the reduction in the revenues in Benares, but as it is obvious that similar causes will not exist either in Bengal or Behar, no arguments against fixing the assessment in these provinces can be founded upon this temporary deficiency in the revenues of Benares.

Still less can any just conclusion be drawn against fixing the demand of Government upon the lands from the instance of the settlement made last year in Midnapore by the present collectors. Mr. Shore observes that if this assessment, formed upon documents of the greatest probable authenticity, had been declared permanent, the collection of it, if enforced, would have reduced many of the talookdars to distress, and some to ruin; that, are we not as likely, or more so, to err in the distribution of the assessment upon collectorships, as upon the subdivisions of a peculiar district?

How far this reasoning is applicable to the settlement which we are about to conclude in the districts of Bengal will appear from a reference to our Proceedings regarding Midnapore.

The canongoe<sup>1</sup> of that district delivered in accounts in which the gross produce of the country was estimated to be nearly double the amount of the revenue collected from it, on account of the Government. The supposed profits of the land-holders, after making allowances for their charges in collecting the rents, were thought larger than what they

<sup>1</sup> Canongoe (P. 'kánûm-gó,' from A. 'kánûm,' a rule, regulation, law, canon, and P. 'gó,' speaking, telling), an officer of the Government whose duty was to keep a register of all circumstances relating to the land revenue and, when called upon, to declare the customs of each district, the nature of the tenures, the quantity of land in cultivation, the nature of the produce, the amount of rent paid, etc.

were entitled to, and measures were taken to appropriate a part of them to the public use.

A considerable increase was accordingly imposed on the country, and the canongoe through whom the accounts of the produce were obtained pledged himself to become responsible should the produce of any district fall short of his estimates.

It appears from the collector's report, referred to in Mr. Shore's Minute of the 25th November last, that the collection of this settlement was made with much difficulty, and that it was attended with great distress, entailing indigence on the renters of Mineehourah, Kookulpour, and Boccamootah, and that in the two last districts, after the mofussil assets had been completely collected, there remained a balance due from those mehals which it was pretty well known was discharged by the sale of effects and the mortgaging of rent-free lands.

The collector further represented that the canongoe's estimates had in many places proved fallacious—that the assessment was too high—and that there was an absolute necessity for lowering it in the ensuing year; he was accordingly directed to repair to Calcutta, and after the accounts which he brought with him were carefully examined, we judged it expedient to grant him a general authority to propose such remissions in the assessment as might appear to him necessary.

I confess my expectations were never sanguine that this settlement would be realised without distress to the numerous Zemindars and talookdars, who are the proprietors of the lands in Midnapore; it is my own opinion that every attempt of this nature to appropriate to the use of Government the profits of the land-holders, allowing them only what, upon an arbitrary average estimate, is deemed sufficient for their maintenance and defraying the necessary charges of collecting the rents of their estates, will end in disappointment to Government, ruin to the proprietors of the soil, and in the establishment of mutual distrust.

The history of the settlement may be traced upon the

public proceedings; and I trust that the state to which it has reduced many land-holders will suggest to the Court of Directors very strong arguments in favour of a permanent assessment, and prove to them the justness of Mr. Shore's own observation: 'That the mere admission of the rights of the Zemindars, unless followed by the measures that will give value to it, will operate but little towards the improvement of the country; that the demands of a foreign dominion like ours ought certainly to be more moderate than the impositions of the native rulers; and that to render the value of what we possess permanent, our demands ought to be fixed; that, removed from the control of our own Government the distance of half the globe, every practicable restriction should be imposed upon the Administration in India without circumscribing its necessary power; and the property of the inhabitants be secured against the fluctuations of caprice, or the licence of unrestrained control.'

The principles which influenced the conclusion of this settlement, I am happy to say, have not found admission amongst those which are to regulate the formation of future settlement of the districts in Bengal; and consequently I trust that we shall not be subjected to the same disappointment which we have experienced in Midnapore.

Mr. Shore admits the general principle of the inexpediency of the total of the public assessment being increased at any future settlement; but the adoption of his proposition to correct periodically the inequalities that may appear in the proportions which are paid by the individual land-holders would, in my opinion, be attended with almost every discouragement and mischievous effect that the annual farming system could be supposed to produce.

No previous assurances, however solemn, could convince the Zemindars that Government would, at the expiration of their leases, be contented with less than the highest rent that could be extracted from their lands; and even if experience should prove to them that the intention of laying an additional assessment upon the most wealthy went no farther than to indemnify the public treasury for the losses

that had been sustained by deficiencies in the rents of others, it would be vain to expect them to admit the justice of the principle that the industrious man should be taxed in proportion to the idleness and mismanagement of his neighbours; or, if they admitted it, to persuade them that the shares of those deficiencies had been fairly and impartially distributed; and I must confess that I do not think that a Government, or set of collectors, will ever exist in this country that would be qualified at the end of ten years' lease, to discriminate the acquisitions of fortune which had arisen from advantageous agreements from those that had been produced by the superior economy and industry of other proprietors; and, consequently, that to proportion a general assessment upon that principle would be absolutely impracticable.

Although the Zemindars and other land-holders in this country are in general extremely improvident, and from their having been hitherto harassed with annual assessments would no doubt receive a ten years' settlement with much satisfaction, yet short-sighted as they are, I cannot by any means admit that they would not clearly see a wide difference between a tenure of short duration and a perpetuity. But should it even happen, in the first moments of their joy, that they could lay aside all apprehension of meeting with vexations in future settlements, they would infallibly recollect themselves when their leases approached within three or four years' conclusion; and as the same pernicious effects would then follow that are now experienced annually, they would endeavour to give themselves an appearance of poverty by concealing the wealth that they might have acquired, and to depreciate the value of their lands by neglecting their cultivation, in hopes of obtaining by those means more advantageous terms at an ensuing settlement; and these consequences, by withdrawing the application of certain portions of stock and industry, must operate for a time to the general detriment of the State.

I trust, however, that it cannot be imagined that I would

recommend that the proposed settlement should be made with a blind precipitation, or without our having obtained all the useful information that, in my opinion, can be expected of the real state and value of the different districts.

Twenty years have been employed in collecting information. In 1769, supervisors were appointed; in 1770, provincial councils were established; in 1772, a committee of circuit was deputed to make the settlement, and armed with all powers of the Presidency; in 1776, aumeens<sup>1</sup> were appointed to make a hustabood<sup>2</sup> of the country; in 1781, the provincial councils of revenue were abolished, and collectors were sent into the several districts, and the general council and management of the revenue was lodged in a committee of revenue at Calcutta, under the immediate inspection of Government. Like our predecessors, we set out with seeking for new information; and we have now been three years in collecting it. Voluminous reports have been transmitted by the several collectors on every point which was deemed of importance. The object of these various arrangements has been to obtain an accurate knowledge of the value of the lands, and of the rules by which the Zemindars collect the rents from the ryots.

The collectors in Behar, not even excepting the two to whom Mr. Shore alludes as having declared it impracticable to make the proposed settlement, have already, with great appearance of benefit to the Company and of advantage 'to the natives, made considerable progress in executing the instructions that they have received for making the ten

<sup>1</sup> Aumeens, ameen: The word is Ar. 'amin,' meaning a trustworthy person, and then an inspector, intendant, etc. In India it has several uses, as applied to native officers employed under the civil courts, but nearly all reducible to the definition of *fide commissarius*. Thus an ameen may be employed by a court to investigate accounts connected with a suit, to sell or to deliver over possession of immovable property, to carry out legal process as a bailiff, etc. The name is also applied to native assistants in the duties of land survey.

<sup>2</sup> 'Hustabood' (P. 'hast-o-bud'), literally, which is and was. A comparative account; an examination by measurement of the assets or resources of the country, made immediately previous to the harvest; and also, in a more general sense, a detailed inquiry into the value of lands financially considered.

years' settlement, conformable to the orders of the Court of Directors ; and in every instance where it has been stated that further time was necessary to acquire a minute knowledge of the resources of any particular district, the Board has readily acquiesced in allowing a partial delay.

I shall certainly be no less inclined to recommend the observation of the same rule during the progress of the settlement in Bengal and Orissa ; and in those districts that, from long mismanagement, are evidently in a state of decline and disorder I shall not only willingly agree to postpone the settlement for a twelvemonth longer, but also assent to any modification in it that may appear to be applicable to their present condition. But after having adopted those and such other measures as may appear necessary from the reports and explanations which may be laid before us by the different collectors whilst they are engaged in the execution of our instructions, I must declare that I am clearly of opinion that this Government will never be better qualified, at any given period whatever, to make an equitable settlement of the land revenue of these provinces ; and if the want of further information was to be admitted now or at any other future period as a ground for delaying the declaration of the permanency of the assessment, the commencement of the happiness of the people and of the prosperity of the country would be delayed for ever.

The question which has been so much agitated in this country, whether the Zemindars and talookdars are the actual proprietors of the soil or only officers of Government, has always appeared to me to be very uninteresting to them ; whilst their claim to a certain percentage upon the rents of their lands has been admitted, and the right of Government to fix the amount of those rents at its own discretion has never been denied or disputed.

Under the former practice of annual settlement, Zemindars who have either refused to agree to pay the rents that have been required, or who have been thought unworthy of being entrusted with the management, have, since our

acquisition of the Dewanny, been dispossessed in numberless instances, and their land held khas,<sup>1</sup> or let to a farmer; and when it is recollected that pecuniary allowances have not always been given to dispossessed Zemindars in Bengal, I conceive that a more nugatory or delusive species of property could hardly exist.

On the other hand, the grant of these lands at a fixed assessment will stamp a value upon them hitherto unknown; and by the facility which it will create of raising money upon them, either by mortgage or sale, will provide a certain fund for the liquidation of public or private demands, or prove an incitement to exertion and industry by securing the fruits of those qualities in the tenure to the proprietors' own benefit.

The latter part of Mr. Shore's Minute recorded on the 21st December, commencing from the 27th paragraph and from thence to the conclusion, relates to a settlement of four or five pergunnahs<sup>2</sup> in the collectorship of Behar proper, concluded by the collector and confirmed by this Board in December, 1788, from year to year until the pleasure of the Court of Directors regarding it shall be known.

I shall hereafter record my sentiments on Mr. Shore's remarks on this settlement. I must observe, however, that they are not applicable to the general question now under discussion. The parts of that settlement which Mr. Shore thinks exceptionable have not been adopted in the remainder of the collector's districts nor in the other collectorship in Behar; nor is it proposed to introduce them in the settlement of Bengal.

I have thought it necessary to say thus much lest from the subjects being so much blended in Mr. Shore's Minute

<sup>1</sup> 'Khas' (A. 'khás'), private, peculiar; particular, proper. Revenue collected immediately by Government without the agency of Zemindars. Under the Company's government in Bengal, the term is generally applied when there is an immediate division of actual produce between the Government and the ryots, and also where the revenues of smaller portions than Zemindaries are let to farm.

<sup>2</sup> Pergunnah' (H. 'pargana, Skt. 'pragan,' to reckon up), a subdivision of a district.

it should be supposed that his objections to the settlement of these pergunnahs in the collectorship of Behar proper are equally applicable to the general plan of settlement for the Company's dominions at large.

I readily agree, however, that the collector of Behar be called upon to answer the queries proposed by Mr. Shore, and that his reply be transmitted to the Court of Directors, with such remarks upon it as we may hereafter think necessary.

I now come to the remaining point upon which I have differed with Mr. Shore; viz., the expediency of taking into the hands of Government the collection of the internal duties on commerce, and allowing to the Zemindars and others by whom these duties have been hitherto levied a deduction adequate to the amount which they now realize from them.

Mr. Shore's propositions for the settlement of Bengal will point out his sentiments regarding the collection of the internal duties; and I believe it was principally at my instance that he acquiesced in the resolution for taking the collection of these duties into the hands of Government in Behar, as entered on our Proceedings of the 18th September last.

It was by my desire, also, that similar instructions were issued to the collector of Midnapore.

To those who have adopted the idea that the Zemindars have no property in the soil, and that Government is the actual landlord, and that the Zemindars are officers of Government removable at pleasure, the question of regarding the right of the Zemindars to collect the internal duties on commerce would appear unnecessary. The committing the charge of the land-revenues to one officer and the collection of the internal duties to another would to them appear only a deviation from the practice of the Mogul Government and not an infringement of the rights of individuals; but what I have already said will be sufficient to show that these are not the grounds upon which I have recommended the adoption of the measure.



I admit the proprietary rights of the Zemindars, that they have hitherto held the collection of the internal duties ; but this privilege appears to me so incompatible with the general prosperity of the country that however it may be sanctioned by long usage I conceive there are few who will not think us justifiable in resuming it.

It is almost unnecessary to observe how much the prosperity of this country depends upon the removal of all obstructions, both to its internal and foreign commerce. It is from these resources only that it can supply the large proportions of its wealth which are annually drained from it both by the Company and by individuals.

The rates by which the internal duties are levied, and the amount of them collected in each Zemindary, have, as far as I have been able to trace, never been ascertained : when the lands of the Zemindars have been leased out to farmers these duties have been collected by them.

It is, I believe, generally allowed that no individual in a State can possess an inherent right to levy a duty on goods or merchandise purchased or sold within the limits of his estate, and much less upon goods passing along the public roads which lead through it. This is a privilege which the sovereign power alone is entitled to exercise, and nowhere else can it be lodged with safety. Every unauthorised exaction levied on the goods of a merchant and every detention of them in their progress through the country is a great public injury. The importation of foreign commodities and the exportation of our own are alike obstructed ; for accumulated exactions, by raising the price, diminish the consumption of the commodity, and the merchant is under the necessity either to give up his trade or to go to other countries in search of the same goods. It cannot be expected that a Zemindar will be influenced by these considerations, and much less a temporary farmer, whose only object can be to exact from the cultivators of the soil, as well as from merchants and traders, as much as he can compel them to pay.

The Court of Directors themselves appear to have been of

this opinion from the following paragraph of their letter of April 10, 1771 :

‘As we have reason to believe that many bazars are held in the provinces without the authority of Government, and which must be an infringement of its right, a great detriment to the public collection, and a burden and oppression on the inhabitants, you will take care that no bazars or gunges<sup>1</sup> be kept up but such as particularly belonging to the Government. But in such bazars and gunges the duties are to be rated in such manner as their situations and the flourishing state of the respective districts will admit.’

And in the same letter they observe : ‘Persuaded as we are that the internal traffic of Bengal has received further checks from the duties which are levied and the exactions which are imposed at petty chokies,<sup>2</sup> we positively direct that no such chokies be suffered to continue, on any pretence whatever, to impede the course of commerce from one part of the province to the other. It is necessary, however, that the nine general chokies which have been established for collecting the duties payable to the circar should remain, and these only.’

The chokies stationed upon the banks of the rivers to collect the duties on boats on the part of the Zemindars were directed to be abolished in consequence of the Company’s orders, and adequate deductions were granted to the Zemindars. But the duties levied at the hauts, gunges, and inland chokies, were ordered to be continued in the hands of the Zemindars as formerly. The Zemindars were also prohibited from collecting inland rahdarry duties—that is, duties upon goods not bought or sold within their Zemindaries, but only passing through them. Notwithstanding this prohibition has been frequently repeated, our proceed-

<sup>1</sup> ‘Gunge’ (H. ‘gunj,’ a store, store-house, market) : ‘Gunge, a market principally for grain’ (Veralest, ‘View of Bengal’).

<sup>2</sup> ‘Choky’ (H. ‘chauki’), a chair, seat, guard, watch ; the station of a guard or watchman ; a place where an officer is stationed to receive tolls and customs.

ings exhibit numerous instances of these rahdarry<sup>1</sup> duties being levied by Zemindars and farmers, and from opportunities which are afforded them by having the collection of the authorised inland duties in their hand I have every reason to believe that the practice is but too general. I understand that the collector of Nuddea has lately abolished a very considerable number of chokies at which unauthorised duties were collected in the internal trade by the officers of the Zemindar in defiance of the repeated orders of Government. If these interruptions to commerce are found to exist in a district almost in the neighbourhood of Calcutta and under a vigilant collector, it may be supposed that, in the more inland parts of the country and under collectors less active, the evil prevails to a greater extent.

The inefficacy of the power of Government to restrain Zemindars from these oppressive exactions whilst they are allowed to possess the right of levying taxes of any kind upon commerce has been long experienced in many shapes. It is only by the total resumption of this right that such abuses can be prevented; and as the general interests of the community require that a regular system of taxation upon the internal trade of the country should be established, we are justified by the constant practice of our country and that of other nations in demanding from individuals, upon granting them a full compensation for their present value, a surrender of privileges which counteract so beneficial a measure.

Further benefits are to be derived from this arrangement when the amount of the internal duties, the rates by which they are levied, and the articles subject to the payment of them, are ascertained. Some may be increased and others diminished or struck off according as may be judged advisable; and in course of time, as commerce and wealth

<sup>1</sup> 'Rahdarry' (P. 'rah-dari,' from 'ráh,' a roadway, and 'dáré' from 'dashtan,' to keep), keeping the roads. The term, applied to duties, means those collected at different stations in the interior of the country from passengers, on account of grain and other necessities of life, by the Zemindars and other officers of Government.

increase, such regulations may be made in the duties on the internal trade and the foreign imports and exports as will afford a large addition to the income of the public, wherever its necessities may require it, without discouraging trade or manufactures or imposing any additional rent on the lands.

Having stated such remarks on Mr. Shore's Minute as appeared to me necessary, I shall subjoin the following observations on the Revenue System of this country, which may be found deserving of consideration.

Although Government has an undoubted right to collect a portion of the produce of the lands to supply the public exigencies, it cannot, consistent with the principles of justice and policy, assume to itself a right of making annual and periodical valuations of the lands and taking the whole produce except such portions as it may think proper to relinquish to the proprietors for their maintenance and for defraying the charges of managing their estates.

- The supreme power in every State must possess the right of taxing the subject, agreeably to certain general rules; but the practice which has prevailed in this country for some time past of making frequent valuations of the lands, and where one person's estate has improved and another's declined, of appropriating the increased produce of the former to supply the deficiencies in the latter is not taxation, but in fact a declaration that the property of the landholder is at the absolute disposal of Government. Every man who is acquainted with the causes which operate to impoverish a country must be sensible that our Indian territories must continue to decline as long as the practice is adhered to.

The maxim that equality in taxation is an object of the greatest importance, and that in justice all the subjects of a State should contribute as nearly as possible in proportion to the income which they enjoy under its protection, does not prove the expediency of varying the demand of Government upon the lands; on the contrary,

we shall find that, in countries in which this maxim is one of the leading principles in the imposition of taxes, the valuation of the land on which they are levied is never varied.

In raising a revenue to answer the public exigencies we ought to be careful to interfere as little as possible in those sources from which the wealth of the subject is derived.

Agriculture is the principal source of the riches of Bengal; the cultivator of the soil furnishes most of the materials for its numerous manufactures. In proportion as agriculture declines the quantity of the materials must diminish and the value of them increase, and consequently the manufactures must become dearer and the demand for them be gradually lessened. Improvement in agriculture will produce the opposite effects.

The attention of Government ought therefore to be directed to render the assessment upon the lands as little burdensome as possible; this is to be accomplished only by fixing it. The proprietor will then have some inducement to improve his lands, and as his profits will increase in proportion to his exertions, he will gradually become better able to discharge the public revenue.

By reserving the collection of the internal duties on commerce, Government may at all times appropriate to itself a share of the accumulating wealth of its subjects without their being sensible of it. The burden will also be more equally distributed; at present the whole weight rests upon the land-holders and cultivators of the soil. Whereas the merchants and inhabitants of the cities and towns, the proprietors of rent-free lands, and in general all persons not employed in the cultivation of the lands, paying revenue to Government, contribute but little, in proportion to their means, to the exigencies of the State, it is evident, that varying the assessment on the lands is not the mode of carrying into practice the maxim that all the subjects of a State ought to contribute to the public exigencies in proportion to their incomes, and

that other means must be employed for effecting this object.

In case of a foreign invasion, it is a matter of the last importance, considering the means by which we keep possession of the country, that the proprietors of the land should be attached to us from motives of self-interest. A land-holder who is secured in the quiet enjoyment of a profitable estate can have no motive in wishing for a change. On the contrary, if the rents of his lands are raised in proportion to their improvement ; if he is liable to be dispossessed should he refuse to pay the increase required of him ; or if threatened with imprisonment or confiscation of his property on account of balance due to Government upon an assessment which his lands were unequal to pay, he will readily listen to any offers which are likely to bring about a change that cannot place him in a worse situation, but which hold out to him hopes of a better.

Until the assessment on the lands is fixed, the constitution of our internal government in this country will never take that form which alone can lead to the establishment of good laws and ensure a due administration of them. For whilst the assessment is liable to frequent variation, a great portion of the time and attention of the supreme Board, and the unremitting application of the Company's servants of the first abilities and most established integrity will be required to prevent the land-holders being plundered and the revenues of Government being diminished at every new settlement ; and powers and functions which ought to be lodged in different hands must continue, as at present, vested in the same person ; and whilst they remain so united we cannot expect that the laws which may be enacted for the protection of the rights and property of the land-holders and cultivators of the soil will ever be duly enforced.

We have by a train of the most fortunate events obtained the dominion of one of the most fertile countries on the face of the globe, with a population of mild and

industrious inhabitants, perhaps equal to, if not exceeding in number, that of all the other British possessions put together.

Its real value to Britain depends upon the continuance of its ability to furnish a large annual investment to Europe, to give considerable assistance to the Treasury at Canton, and to supply the pressing and extensive wants of other Presidencies.

The consequences of the heavy drains of wealth from the above causes, with the addition of that which has been occasioned by the remittance of the private fortunes, have been for many years past, and are now, severely felt by the great diminution of the current specie and by the languor which has thereby been thrown upon the cultivation and the general commerce of the country.

A very material alteration in the principles of our system of management has, therefore, become indispensably necessary, in order to restore this country to a state of prosperity, and to enable it to continue to be a solid support to the British interests and power in this part of the world.

We can only accomplish this desirable object by devising measures to rouse and increase the industry of the inhabitants; and it would be in vain to hope that any means but those of holding forth prospects of private advantage to themselves could possibly succeed to animate them to exertion.

I am sorry to be obliged to acknowledge it, but it is a truth too evident to deny, that the land proprietors throughout the whole of the Company's provinces are in a general state of poverty and depression.

I cannot even except the principal Zemindars from this observation, and it was not without concern that I saw it verified very lately, in one instance, by the Rajah of Burdwan, who pays a yearly rent of upward of £400,000 to Government, having allowed some of his most valuable lands to be sold for the discharge of an inconsiderable balance due to Government.

The indolent and debased character of many of the Zemindars must no doubt have contributed to the ruin of their circumstances; and though I am afraid the cases are but few, yet I conceive it to be possible that there may be some instances in which the poverty that is pleaded may be only pretended.

Either supposition must, however, reflect some discredit upon our system of management; for it would imply that we have been deficient in taking proper measures to incite the Zemindars to a line of conduct which would produce advantage to themselves; or that if they have acquired wealth their apprehension of our rapacity induces them to conceal it.

We are, therefore, called upon to endeavour to remedy evils by which the public interests are essentially injured; and by granting perpetual leases of the lands at a fixed assessment we shall render our subjects the happiest people in India; and we shall have reason to rejoice at the increase of their wealth and prosperity, as it will infallibly add to the strength and resources of the State.

I therefore propose: That the Letter from the Board of Revenue, with the reports of the collectors in Bengal respecting the ten years' settlement, and Mr. Shore's Minute and Proposition, delivered in for record in June last, be now entered upon the proceedings.

That a copy of Mr. Shore's Propositions (the articles relating to the gunges excepted), with such of the alterations contained in our Resolutions of the 25th November last for the settlement of Midnapore as are applicable to the districts in general, be transmitted to the Board of Revenue; and that they be directed to proceed, without delay, to form the ten years' settlement in Bengal, agreeable to the rules and prescriptions therein laid down.

That the Board of Revenue be directed to notify to the land-holders that the settlement, if approved by the Court of Directors, will become permanent, and no alteration take place at the expiration of the ten years.

That the Board of Revenue be further directed to issue the



same instructions to the collectors in Bengal, for the separation of the gunges, bazars, and hauts held within them, as have been transmitted to the collectors of Behar and the collector of Midnapore.

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL IN COUNCIL TO THE COURT OF  
DIRECTORS.

FORT WILLIAM,  
*March 6, 1793.*

HONOURABLE SIRS,

. . . The same principle which induced us to resolve upon the separation of the Talooks prompted us to recommend to you on the 30th March, 1792, the abolition of a custom introduced under the native Government, by which most of the principal zemindarries in the country are made to descend entire to the eldest son, or next heir of the last incumbent, in opposition both to the Hindoo and the Mahomedan law, which admit of no exclusive right of inheritance in favour of primogeniture, but require that the property of a deceased person shall be divided amongst his sons or heirs in certain specified proportions. Finding, however, upon a reference to your former orders, that you had frequently expressed a wish that the large zemindarries should be dismembered if it could be effected consistently with the principles of justice, we did not hesitate to adopt the measure without waiting for your sanction. We are happy to find that this measure corresponds so entirely with the sentiments which you have expressed in this paragraph respecting the good policy of dismembering these very large zemindarries, the evils attending which become every day more strongly impressed upon our minds. The zemindars whom the regulation will affect cannot fail to be satisfied with it, as it leaves them at liberty to divide their property or to allow it to devolve to their heirs after their death, in the proportions to which they are entitled by law, or to keep it entire by devising the whole of it by will to any one of their heirs or relations. There can be no

doubt but this regulation will be productive of the desired effect in due course of time, as it is to be presumed that many of the principal land-holders, from motives of affection to their children, or with a view to conform to the dictates of the law, will divide the property amongst their sons or heirs, or, by making no will, leave it to devolve to them in the proportions which they may be respectively entitled to inherit.

With respect to your suggestion regarding waste lands, we do not hesitate to offer it as our opinion that any attempt to stipulate for a proportion of their produce would not only be considered a breach of the engagements entered into with the land-holders, but that it would greatly counteract, if not altogether damp, that spirit of industry and improvement to excite which is the great object of fixing the tax upon each estate.

It is necessary to apprise you (of what you could not have been aware) that all waste lands form a part of the estates of the different land-holders, and the boundaries of the portions of those lands that belong to each individual are as well defined as the limits of the cultivated parts of their property, and that they are as tenacious of their right of possession in the former as the latter.

The waste lands may in general be comprehended under two descriptions. First, those in the level country which are interspersed in more or less extensive tracts amongst the cultivated lands; and secondly, the Sunderbunds (the country along the sea-shore between the Hoogly and Megna Rivers), and the foot of the vast range of mountains which nearly encircle your Bengal provinces.

The first-mentioned description of waste ground will be easily brought into cultivation when the zemindars have funds for that purpose, and provided they are certain of reaping the profit arising from the improvement. These lands, however, are not wholly unproductive to them at present. They furnish pasture for the great herds of cattle that are necessary for the plough, and also to supply the

inhabitants with ghee (a species of butter) and milk, two of the principal necessities of life in this country. It is true that the lands in this desolate state far exceed what would suffice for the above purposes; but it is the expectation of bringing them into cultivation and reaping the profit of them that has induced many to agree to the decennial jumma which has been assessed upon their lands. It is this additional resource alone which can place the land-holders in a state of affluence, and enable them to guard against inundation or drought, the two calamities to which this country must ever be liable until the land-holders are enabled to provide (as we are of opinion they in a great measure might) by the above-mentioned and other works of art. To stipulate with them, therefore, for any part of the produce of their waste lands would not only diminish the incitement to these great and essential improvements in the agriculture of the country, but deprive them of the means of effecting it. In addition to these weighty objections it would be necessary, in order to obtain any revenue from the waste lands of this description, to enter into innumerable and complicated scrutinies and measurements in the first instance to ascertain the proportions of waste and cultivated lands in each individual's estate, and to renew them annually or occasionally to know the progress made in the cultivation of the latter. The altercations and vexatious oppressions, and the great expense which would inevitably result in settling what proportion of these waste lands should be liable to assessment, and the rates at which they should be taxed, would certainly destroy all ideas of a fixed taxation, and prevent the introduction of that spirit of industry and confidence in our good faith which is expected to result from it. The land-holders and cultivators of the soil would continue (as they have hitherto been) little more than the farmers and labourers upon a great estate, of which Government would be the landlord. In endeavouring, therefore, to obtain an addition to the public income by reserving a portion of the produce of the waste lands, Government would risk the realising of the very ample

revenue which has been assessed upon the country, and landed property would continue at the very depreciated value which it has hitherto borne.

With respect to the second description of waste lands (the lower parts of the Sunderbunds perhaps excepted) they also include the estates of the individuals with whom the settlement is made. But supposing these lands to be at the disposal of Government, as they have for the most part been covered with forest or underwood from time immemorial, and as the soil is in itself, compared with that of the open country, unproductive, and (besides the labour and expense which would attend the bringing it into cultivation) its produce would be comparatively of little value, from the distance of the high roads and navigable rivers, and the consequent difficulty of bringing it to market. We are of opinion, therefore, that whilst there is a call for all the labour not only of the present inhabitants, but of the greatest increased population that peace and prosperity can be expected to produce, to bring the waste lands in the open country into cultivation, the labour of any considerable number of people would be unprofitably bestowed upon such wild and inhospitable tracts, supposing it could be directed thereto by the grant of rewards or immunities, or by any other means. When the open country is brought into cultivation the industry of the people will then of itself be directed to these desolate tracts; but as this cannot be expected to be the case for a long period of years, we think that any premature attention to these objects that might tend in any degree to interfere with the noble system of which you have laid the foundation, would be inconsistent with good policy, and defeat the end which it might be expected to answer.

We think this a proper opportunity to observe that if at any future period the public exigencies should require an addition to your resources, you must look for this addition in the increase of the general wealth and commerce of the country, and not in the augmentation of the tax upon the land. Although agriculture and commerce promote each

other, yet in this country, more than in any other, agriculture must flourish before its commerce can become extensive. The materials for all the most valuable manufactures are the produce of its own lands. It follows, therefore, that the extent of its commerce must depend upon the encouragement given to agriculture, and that whatever tends to impede the latter destroys the two great sources of its wealth. At present almost the whole of your revenue is raised upon the lands, and any attempt to participate with the land-holders in the produce of the waste lands would (as we have said) operate to discourage their being brought into cultivation, and consequently prevent the augmentation of articles for manufacture or export. The increase of cultivation (which nothing but permitting the land-holders to reap the benefit of it can effect) will be productive of the opposite consequences. To what extent the trade and manufactures of this country may increase under the very liberal measures which have been adopted for enabling British subjects to convey their goods to Europe at a moderate freight, we can form no conjecture. We are satisfied, however, that it will far exceed general expectation, and the duties on the import and export trade (exclusive of any internal duties which it may in future be thought advisable to impose), that may hereafter be levied, will afford an ample increase to your resources, and without burdening the people or affecting in any shape the industry of the country.

From the proceedings which we shall forward to you by the next despatch, you will find that we have anticipated your wishes respecting the pattaahs to be granted by the land-holders to the ryots. It is with pleasure we acquaint you that throughout the greater part of the country specific agreements have been exchanged between the land-holders and the ryots, and that where these writings have not been entered into, the land-holders have bound themselves to prepare and deliver them by fixed periods. We shall here only observe that under the new arrangements to which we shall presently advert, the ryots will always have it in their own power to compel an adherence to the agreements by an

appeal to the courts of justice whenever the land-holders may attempt to infringe them.

We now come to the very important part of your instructions empowering us to declare the tax assessed upon the lands in the provinces fixed for ever.

From the advices which we have forwarded to you since the date of the latest letter acknowledged in your instructions, you will have perceived that so far from any circumstances having occurred to defeat your reasonable expectations of the result of the settlement, the jumma of it has exceeded the estimated amount, and that every occurrence has tended to confirm and strengthen the decided opinions which we formerly expressed of the expediency of the measure. We are not aware of any material reason that would render it advisable to postpone the declaration, whereas there are a variety of considerations which appear to us to make it highly expedient that the valuable rights and tenures which you have conferred upon the land-holders in these provinces should be announced to them without delay. The seasons this year have been remarkably favourable, and abundance reigns throughout the country. The public credit is high, the paper in circulation bearing an interest of 8 per cent. selling at a premium of 1 per cent., and the interest of money is proportionably low. As this paper is in course of payment, there is every ground to expect that the large capitals possessed by many of the natives (which they will have no means of employing when the public debt is discharged) will be applied to the purchase of landed property as soon as the tenure is declared to be secure, and they are capable of estimating what profit they will be certain of deriving from it by the public tax upon it being unalterably fixed. With respect to those land-holders with whom a ten years' settlement has been concluded, the announcing to them that their jumma is fixed for ever, will not only incline them to pay their current revenue with cheerfulness, but add to their ability to discharge it by the credit which they will obtain from the increased value of their tenures. On the other hand, the declaration will not fail to render the few land-

holders who have not entered into engagements, eager to secure to themselves the same valuable rights and privileges.

For the above reasons we should think it impolitic to delay the declaration that you have empowered us to make, the announcing of which will, we are persuaded, be considered as the commencement of the era of improvement and prosperity in this country. We shall be particularly careful that the notification is drawn up in the manner you prescribe, and that the terms of it may be calculated to impress the land-holders with the value and importance of the rights conferred upon them, and of your solicitude for their welfare and prosperity. We shall likewise, to prevent any future misconception, expressly reserve to you the right of establishing and collecting any internal duties that you may hereafter think proper to impose, and also declare your determination to assess all alienated or rent-free lands that may hereafter revert to Government, or be proved, after a regular trial in a court of justice, to be held under an invalid tenure. We shall further declare (although a clause to that effect has been inserted in the engagements with the land-holders) that you do not mean, by fixing the public demand upon the lands, to debar yourselves from the exercise of the right inherent in you as sovereigns of the country, of making such regulations as you may occasionally think proper for the protection of the ryots and inferior land-holders, or other orders of people concerned in the cultivation of the lands. A desire to give this notification the consideration that the importance of it merits, is the reason of its not having been transmitted to you by this despatch.

We now come to the close of your instructions, 'the watching over and maturing of this system, maintaining under future administrations the energy which has commenced it,' and to the other important points detailed in the paragraphs specified in the margin.

It is with much satisfaction we acquaint you that we have endeavoured to provide for these important points, as well as for the administration of the laws and regulations in general, both civil and criminal. The arrangements which we have

adopted for this purpose are contained in the accompanying copy of a Minute from the Governor-General, recorded in our proceedings of the 11th ultimo, and we have resolved to carry them into execution as soon as the collections for the Bengal year are brought to a close. For the reasons at large which have induced us to adopt these arrangements, as well as for the detail of them, we must refer you to the Minute itself. We shall here only state some observations respecting them, as they are immediately connected with the part of your instructions above noticed.

The next object which is most essential to the prosperity of your dominions is the providing for the due enforcement not only of the regulations respecting the decennial settlement, but of the laws and regulations in general which in any respect affect the rights or property of your subjects. You will observe from the Governor-General's Minute that we have anticipated your remark (than which nothing can be more just) that the neglect of instituted regulations has been most noxious to your affairs, and we have long been of opinion that no system will ever be carried into effect so long as the personal qualifications of the individuals that may be appointed to superintend it form the only security for the due execution of it. In this country, as in every other, security of property must be established by a system upheld by its inherent principles, and not by the men who are to have the occasional conduct of it. The body of the people must feel and be satisfied of this security before industry will exert itself, or the moneyed men embark their capitals in agricultural or commercial speculations. There are certain powers and functions which can never be vested in the same officers without destroying all confidence in the protection of the laws. This remark is particularly applicable to the various functions vested in the present collectors. All causes relating to the rights of the several descriptions of land-holders and cultivators of the soil, and all claims arising between them and their securities, have been excepted from the cognisance of the regular courts of justice, and made exclusively cognisable by the collector of



the revenue. This officer has of late years been allowed a commission upon the collections, and at all times the realising of the revenue has been considered as his most important duty, and any failure in the successful collection of it has subjected him to dismissal from his office; under such circumstances it was naturally to be expected that the collection of the revenue would be deemed by these officers the most important of their duties, and that all considerations of right would be made subservient to it. Where the power to redress oppressions, and functions that must always have a tendency to promote or screen the commission of them, are united in the same person, a strict adherence to the principles of justice cannot be expected, and still less can it be hoped that the people will feel a confidence of obtaining justice. Upon these and other grounds, which are fully detailed in the Governor-General's Minute, we resolved to abolish the Maal Adawluts or Revenue Courts, and to withdraw from the Board of the Revenue and the collectors all judicial powers, thereby confining their duties and functions to the mere collection of the public dues, and to transfer the cognisance of the causes hitherto tried in these courts to the courts of justice.

For a more particular detail of the constitution of these courts we must refer you to the Governor-General's Minute, and we shall here only observe that courts of justice are to be continued in each collectorship as heretofore, which are to be denominated *Zillah* or District Courts, and that the judge thereof is to have cognisance over civil causes of all descriptions that may arise in his jurisdiction, whether of the nature of those termed revenue causes, and hitherto tried in the Revenue Courts, or of the description of those which have been cognisable in the courts of Dewanny Adawlut. We have resolved, likewise, that the collectors of revenue and their officers, and indeed all the officers of Government, shall be amenable to the courts for acts done in their official capacities, and that Government itself, in cases in which it may be a party with its subjects in matters of property, shall submit its rights to be tried in these courts

under the existing laws and regulations. That these courts may have complete authority over all persons residing in their jurisdictions, and that natives may be able to procure redress against Europeans with the same facility as the latter can obtain it against the former, we have determined that no British subject (excepting King's officers and the civil and the military covenanted servants of the Company) shall be allowed to reside beyond the limits of Calcutta without entering into a bond to make himself amenable to the court of justice of the district in which he may be desirous of taking up his abode, in all civil causes that may be instituted against him by natives. The judges of these courts are also to be vested with the powers of magistrates to preserve the peace, and to apprehend and commit offenders to take their trials before the Courts of Circuit.

We have likewise resolved to establish four provincial Courts of Appeal at the cities of Patna, Dacca, Moorshedabad, and Calcutta ; each of these courts to be superintended by three judges ; an appeal to lie to them in all cases whatsoever from the decisions of the Zillah or District and the City Courts within their respective jurisdictions. The appellate jurisdiction of these courts is to extend over the same districts as are now comprehended in the jurisdictions of the Courts of Circuit, and are as follows : . . .

The city of Calcutta being under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Judicature, the provincial Courts of Appeal will not have cognisance of any civil or criminal causes arising in it.

The decrees of the provincial Courts of Appeal are to be final in all causes of personal property not exceeding in value one thousand rupees, and in suits for real property being malguzary, or paying revenue to Government, where the annual produce shall not exceed five hundred rupees, and in causes for lakerage property (that is, paying no revenue to Government) where the annual produce shall not exceed one hundred. All decisions respecting personal or real property in causes exceeding the above amounts, are to be appealable to the Supreme Board as a Court of Appeal

in the last resort, in their capacity of a Court of Sudder Dewanny Adawlut.

We have likewise resolved that the judges of the provincial Courts of Appeal shall be judges of circuit in their respective divisions. In this capacity they will exercise the same powers and duties as were vested in the judges of the Courts of Circuit on the 3rd December, 1790 (whose offices will consequently be abolished), and will be subordinate to the supreme Government in its capacity of a Nizamut Adawlut or Superior Criminal Court. The great additional advantage, however, which will result from this arrangement is that the provincial Courts of Appeal will consist of three judges; the senior judge will go the circuit of one-half of the stations within their jurisdiction, whilst the other two perform the circuit of the remainder, and consequently the two annual gaol-deliveries will by this means be effected in one-half of the time in which they are accomplished at present by the two judges proceeding together to each station. As to the cities, we have resolved that there shall be a gaol-delivery every month, excepting during the time that the judge may be upon the circuit in the districts.

We are, etc.

## PART III

### MARATHA AFFAIRS

#### MINUTE OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

*(Extract.)*

September 27, 1786.

Having now had the papers relating to the late negotiations between this Government and the Marattas, I feel myself most forcibly called upon to request that this Board will reconsider them in the most serious manner. That the offer, through our resident at Poona, to grant an assistance of troops from Bombay to the Peshwa, proceeded from the warmest anxiety for the public good, I am firmly persuaded; but I am clearly of opinion, that if performed, it would amount to a direct breach of the late treaty of peace with Tippoo Sultan, in the first article of which the contracting parties engage that 'they will not directly or indirectly assist the enemies of each other,' and it would be no less acting in defiance of the Act of 24th George III. I cannot consider the French, or any other intriguers that we know of, as in any degree approaching to the spirit of the above exception. It is unnecessary to examine the policy of a measure we are not at liberty to adopt. We cannot give the three battalions without going to war; we cannot go to war without offending the laws of our country. It is, therefore, high time to extricate ourselves from our present critical and dangerous situation, the continuance of which will not only give the most just grounds of offence to Tippoo, but will probably produce a quarrel with the Poona ministers, who, by Mr. Malet's letter to the Governor-

General of the 2nd of June, already express a diffidence of our sincerity. I beg leave, therefore, to propose to the Board, that we should avail ourselves of the opportunity of the change in the Government to draw a distinct line for our own future conduct, and that I should be directed to write to the Peshwa accordingly.

EARL CORNWALLIS TO GEORGE FORSTER, ESQ.

CAWNPORE,

*October 23, 1787.*

SIR,

You are already acquainted with my principal reasons for employing you in your present mission to Moodajee Boosla, the acting chief of the Berar Government. Should Tippoo abstain from hostilities against our territories or those of our allies, you will content yourself with declaring that you were despatched by me, to assure Moodajee of my esteem and friendship for him, and of the concern that I take in the honour and prosperity of his Government. You will also inform him, that as his servant Beneram Pundit,<sup>1</sup> on account of his great age and infirmities, could not undertake so long a journey, you were selected by me as a person in whom I have entire confidence, to receive those unreserved and important communications to which he alluded in his letter to Beneram Pundit, which was shown to me. You will also, during your residence with Moodajee, in the case that has been supposed, take every means that may be in your power, consistent with the utmost attention to avoid every step that might excite jealousy or suspicion of an unfriendly or indiscreet curiosity, to obtain a knowledge of the extent, revenues, and forces of the Berar Government, and of the real character and disposition of Moodajee, as well as of the other members of his family, and of the persons who are principally

<sup>1</sup> Beneram Pundit had been sent, many years before, as envoy from the Raja to Calcutta. He accompanied Hastings to Benares, and gallantly stood by him in all his danger. He was afterwards Dewan, or Minister, to the Raja.

employed in the management of the public affairs. It will also be of great importance to ascertain the particular relation or connexion of that Court with the other Maratta Chiefs, and the heads under which the principal parties of that State are at present ranged; and also the nature of the connexion between Moodajee and the Nizam, and of any correspondence that may have passed between him and Tippoo. For the above purposes, it will be sufficient to deliver the General Credential letter No. 1 with which you are furnished.

Should you receive certain information of Tippoo's having actually commenced hostilities against us or any of our allies that were included in the late peace, you will deliver to Moodajee the letter No. 2, with which you have been charged with a view to the possibility of that event.

We are so little acquainted with the real disposition, the political views, and several other circumstances of the present situation of the principal Maratta Chiefs, that it is not in my power to give you detailed instructions for your conduct. If the Marattas have engaged or resolved to keep peace with Tippoo, it is not probable that our solicitations would induce them to depart immediately from that plan: and the more earnestly we pressed such solicitations, the chance would be the less for their being successful. Even should their public measures be in some degree undetermined, much appearance of anxiety on our part would be construed by them to proceed from conscious weakness, or they would endeavour to take an unfair advantage of it in settling the terms of any connexion which might be proposed to be formed. You will therefore, after delivering the letter and professing an inclination to form a close connexion and alliance against Tippoo as a common enemy, go no farther than requesting that Moodajee will give immediate orders for a free passage through Cuttack for such troops as this Government may think proper to despatch at any time by that route for carrying on the war, unless your advances are received with an apparent cordiality. In that case a negotiation may be commenced,

and you will consider, as the most important object of it, to obtain the influence of Moodajee to induce the Poonah Government to take that lead in a General Confederacy of the Marattas for renewing the war against Tippoo. Should that object not appear to be attainable, and Moodajee should profess an inclination to form a separate alliance with our Government, it must be encouraged, though, before a final agreement, it will be proper to submit the proposed terms to the consideration of the Board. For unless he is able to make a powerful diversion, or to furnish a large body of good cavalry to act with our army in the Carnatic, it is not clear that we could derive any material advantage from it. If you have reason to believe that his cavalry is of good quality and would prove useful to us, you are, in the event of a connexion of any sort, to look upon it as a desirable object to obtain a body of ten or twelve thousand horse, to join Sir Archibald Campbell by the most convenient and expeditious route; and should all other objects fail, I should think it of consequence if you could obtain, for a reasonable price, from one to two thousand good horses to mount cavalry of our own.

In return for the stipulations which we would wish from the Marattas, I shall now mention the outline of those to which we would agree, in return for those that would be most favourable for us. We would agree, not to make peace with Tippoo without mutual concert, nor before they had recovered the countries that had been conquered from them between the Kristna and Tumbuddra; we would engage to furnish some battalions of infantry and a train of field artillery, to act with their army in that quarter, and we would pay any body of their cavalry that might join and co-operate with our army in the Carnatic.

I have no doubt of your zeal and activity to do everything in your power to promote the national honour and interest, and when you have entered upon this business, and can point out proper objects more clearly than they appear from our present information, I shall be ready to give you as

explicit instructions as may be practicable for your guidance and conduct.

I am, etc.,  
CORNWALLIS.

EARL CORNWALLIS TO C. W. MALET, ESQ.

CALCUTTA,  
*March 10, 1788.*

SIR,

I have received your letter, dated 3rd February, containing an account of your late conferences and communications with the Poonah administration, and I was much pleased with the distinctness and prudence with which you stated the principles upon which we were desirous to invite them to a friendly connexion between the two Governments.

In the situation in which political affairs then stood, and even now, in as far as we have received regular information, you will have little to add in explanation of the principal points which have already been so frequently discussed between you and the Maratta ministers, after you have communicated the substance of my instructions on the subject of their sending a vakeel to England, and on the mode of opening a negotiation for the exchange of the Island of Salsette, in case the latter point shall again be agitated by them.

I am, however, in hourly expectation of receiving authentic accounts of some late occurrences in Europe, which may very possibly lead to hostilities with France; for I find that the French are already informed that the Prussian troops under the Duke of Brunswick have entered Holland, and that warlike preparations were making both in England and France.

I look upon a rupture with Tippoo as a certain and immediate consequence of a war with France, and in that event a vigorous co-operation of the Marattas would certainly be of the utmost importance to our interests in this country.



I am sensible, however, from the caution and coldness with which they have treated all the qualifications that we have offered, in declining to accede to their specific propositions, that it will require great delicacy of management to obtain that co-operation upon terms either creditable or admissible by this Government, and in particular that in applying for it the greatest care should be taken not to betray the smallest symptom of apprehension for the ultimate event of the expected war.

Our declarations of political principles have been so perfectly uniform that there will be no occasion for any alteration in your public language.

Whilst England is at peace in Europe, and whilst the powers of this country abstain from offering injury to us or to our allies, this Government is not at liberty to take any step which might lead to hostilities with any of our neighbours. But a war with France, or a rupture with Tippoo, will put it in our power to contract such alliances as may appear most conducive to our interests.

Although all objections may be in that manner removed against forming a close connexion with the Marattas, yet in the event of a war with Tippoo, either as principal or as an ally to the French, there may be several points of difficult discussion in arranging the terms of the alliance for our mutual assistance. You will therefore, in notifying to the Minister any certain accounts that you may receive of Tippoo's entering into hostilities against us either as an ally to the French or as principal, confine yourself in the first instance to the simple proposition that the Marattas should co-operate with us in the war, by availing themselves of that opportunity to recover the countries that they have lost between the Kistnah and Tumbuddra; and to induce the Minister to take an early and decided part, you may declare that we will engage to attack Tippoo both from the Carnatic and on the Malabar Coast, and to continue the war until they shall obtain possession of those countries, or such compensation for them as they shall deem satisfactory; provided that they will also agree on their part not to make

peace with Tippoo without the consent and concurrence of this Government. But, on the other hand, you will also give him to understand that if, without stepping forward in a proper time as friends with effectual assistance, they leave us to ward off the dangers of the war with our own forces only, they may probably be disappointed if they shall then expect so advantageous stipulations for the Maratta State.

The above would probably be the most convenient principle of connexion between the two Governments, for the mutual diversions would be extremely advantageous to both parties, and arrangements for a junction of forces or partition of conquests would be attended with much intricacy, and might give rise to many disputes.

It is, however, of so much real importance to our interests to obtain the co-operation of the Marattas in the event of a war with Tippoo, that if they are not satisfied with the above proposition, and insist as a condition for acting that their army destined to attack Tippoo's northern dominions shall be joined by a corps of our infantry and a train of artillery, we will not only consent to that stipulation, but even agree to defray the expense of our own troops rather than break off the negotiation, which has been already stated to you in a former instruction.

But though this latitude is granted to you to prevent the delay at critical times which might be occasioned by references from you to this Government, I have that confidence in your prudence and discretion, as to be entirely persuaded that you will make no further use of your powers than shall be indispensably necessary to accomplish the object of this instruction.

I have desired Major Palmer to state to you in the most particular manner the substance of everything that passes between him and Scindia, and indeed it will be highly requisite that your mutual communications should be frequent and full to each other, that there may be no difference in your public language, and both Scindia and Nana may clearly perceive that the principles of both your instructions are exactly the same.

From Scindia's expression of his anxious desire to be the instrument for forming a closer alliance between this Government and the Maratta State, I did not think it prudent to reject the chance of that assistance, which his influence with Nana might afford to your negotiations, and upon this idea I replied to his proposals in general terms, without authorising him to undertake any specific negotiations. This I shall leave entirely with you, communicating to Major Palmer for his guidance my correspondence with you, and availing myself of Scindia's disposition and influence as auxiliary only to your negotiations. If Scindia should, as he once threw out, prosecute his intention of going to Poonah, in that case Major Palmer will most probably accompany him, and you will then be able to consult with him the means which his connexions with Scindia may offer to him for carrying into execution the intentions of this Government.

I am, etc.,  
CORNWALLIS.

## PART IV

### OUDE AFFAIRS

EARL CORNWALLIS TO THE COURT OF DIRECTORS.

FORT WILLIAM,  
*August 2, 1789.*

HONOURABLE SIRS,

You will observe by Mr. Ives's correspondence that great pains have been taken to obtain the benefits that were expected to result to both parties from the commercial treaty with the Vizier by pressing the minister to carry it into full effect in his Excellency's dominions.

I have sufficient reason to believe that Hyder Beg Khan is anxious to preserve my good opinion of his public conduct by doing everything in his power to execute strictly all stipulations on the part of the Vizier with the Company, and to establish internal order and good government in his master's territories. But unluckily the Vizier's early habits of dissipation and inattention to business have not yet entirely left him, and he is so apt to suffer his conduct to be influenced by very undeserving people with whom he sometimes associates, that the wishes and intentions of the minister cannot always be completely executed. Inconvenient, however, as those defects in his Excellency's character may be, it is not easy to find effectual remedies for them.

Material omissions are generally corrected immediately upon my representation. But I think it infinitely more for the real advantage, as well as more creditable to the Company, to bear deficiencies of no great importance on the

part of his Excellency with a little patience, rather than attempt to renew the species of interference in the details of his Government through the medium of our Resident, which has been so judiciously reprobated by your Honourable Court, and from which I have ever most carefully abstained.

The causes to which I have alluded occasioned some delay in reaping all the advantages that might result to both countries from the late commercial arrangements; but the mutual utility of the treaty is apparent, and our large and increasing collections of duties at the Custom-house at Maunjee are sufficient proofs of the particular benefits which have already arisen from it to the commerce of the provinces.

Mr. Duncan's conduct has contributed to promote the extension of commerce and agriculture, and great progress has been made in establishing a system for the regular administration of justice, which alone can secure the happiness of the body of the people in that valuable province.

The great additional resort of Deccan merchants to the mart of Mirzapore, and the applications that have been lately made for tracts of ground to increase the buildings at that place, have been very pleasing indications of the commercial improvements; and it has likewise been with peculiar satisfaction that I have lately received a convincing proof of the good effects of his judicious management upon the minds of the neighbouring powers by an application from Nana Furnavese, the First Minister of the Mahratta State, for leave to build a house for himself in the city of Benares, for the avowed purpose of resorting to it occasionally to perform religious duties; and this application has given me the more pleasure, as the resolution was deliberately adopted upon the report of Mhadajee Pundit, his own household Dewan, whom he sent privately last year with a caravan of pilgrims to make his observations, and who it seems had given a most favourable account of the mildness and the regularity of the British Government.

The future substantial interests of the Company, and the

prosperity and happiness of millions of people, are so deeply concerned in the plan of settlement of land revenue of those provinces, that before I should proceed to execute the orders contained in your revenue letter, dated the 12th April, 1786, I thought it my indispensable duty to acquire every information in my power, and to give the whole subject the most mature consideration.

Although Mr. Shore's precarious health has frequently interrupted his exertions, I consider it as singularly fortunate that the public could profit from his great experience and uncommon abilities upon this important occasion.

His exertions were no less able than laborious in obtaining the materials that were necessary for arranging the principles on which the settlement of the province of Bahar is proposed to be made. But as the revenue letter from the Board gives you a full account of the plan of that settlement, I think it unnecessary to trouble you with a particular statement of it.

There will probably be very little alteration in the principles of the plan that will be adopted for the settlement of Bengal, and after having given the subject much serious consideration, I think myself bound, in justice to my own feelings, and to my opinion of the true interests of the Company, and the British nation, to declare my strongest conviction that the outlines of the plan now proposed, are well calculated to secure and even increase your revenues, and at the same time to raise the national reputation, by its giving a prospect of comfort and happiness to the natives of those valuable dominions far beyond that which they have hitherto enjoyed under any other masters.

Many subsidiary arrangements will be requisite to render the principles of the plan applicable to the various rights and customs that exist in different parts of those provinces, and they must be made by Government either as the propriety of them may appear to observation, or as cases may be brought forward by representation.

The security of property, however, and the certainty which each individual will now feel of being allowed to

enjoy the fruits of his own labours, must operate uniformly as incitements to exertion and industry; and I have purposely in this settlement proposed to withdraw the Gunges from the Zemindars, and to place them in the hands of the Government, in order that it may at all times have an unrestrained power to raise or lower the internal taxes, or duties on particular articles of produce or manufacture, as may be found most suitable to the general interest of commerce; but above all, as the land-revenue, when the Jumma is once fixed, cannot increase, that the Company may, through the medium of duties upon an increased consumption of the necessaries and luxuries of life, participate in the wealth and advantages which, I trust, will be consequences of a permanent revenue settlement to the inhabitants of this country.

The humane and liberal sentiments which dictated the instructions upon which the present plan is founded will prompt you to receive the highest gratification, if my hopes of its producing wealth and happiness to the intelligent and industrious part of the individuals of this country shall be realised; and, independent of all other considerations, I can assure you that it will be of the utmost importance for promoting the solid interests of the Company that the principal land-holders and traders in the interior parts of the country should be restored to such circumstances as to enable them to support their families with decency, and to give a liberal education to their children according to the customs of their respective castes and religions—that a regular gradation of ranks may be supported, which is nowhere more necessary than in this country for preserving order in civil society.

I am sorry to be obliged to say that agriculture and internal commerce has for many years been gradually declining, and that, at present, excepting the class of Shroffs and Banians, who reside almost entirely in great towns, the inhabitants of those provinces were advancing hastily to a general state of poverty and wretchedness.

In this description I must include almost every Zemindar

in the Company's territories, which, though it may have been partly occasioned by their own indolence and extravagance, I am afraid must also be in a great measure attributed to the defects of our former system of government.

The settlement, in conformity to your orders, will only be made for ten years certain, with a notification of its being your intention to declare it a perpetual and unalterable assessment of these provinces if the amount and the principles upon which it has been made shall meet with your approbation.

The circulation of specie in this country has been so long embarrassed with so great a variety of rupees of different qualities and denominations, that the Shroffs have found an ample field for practising their arts in extorting an extravagant batta upon almost every pecuniary transaction in which they are concerned, to the heavy oppression of individuals, and in many instances to the great detriment of the Company's revenue; and there appears to be no effectual remedy for the evil but of that of a general new coinage of all the circulating silver of the country into rupees, or subdivisions of rupees, of exactly the same weight, standard, and denomination.

Amongst the other preparatory steps that have been taken to carry this measure into execution, it has been determined that all revenue settlements shall be made in Sicca rupees, and you may be assured that I shall spare no pains and neglect no precautions to accomplish with safety this salutary work.

As the opium contract terminates this season, proposals for a new contract for the term of four years, as before, have been called for by public advertisement.

The opium ryots were by the terms of the late contract left so much in the power of the contractor that it has been chiefly owing to the moderation and forbearance of Mr. Heatly, who held that contract, that they have not for some time past suffered great vexation and distress.

A regard for the true interests of the Company, no less than the irresistible claims of humanity, rendered it neces-



sary to give these poor people the protection of the laws against personal violence, and to enable them to make an equitable bargain with the contractor for the produce of their labours.

I think it probable that the relief which has been given to the ryots may occasion some decrease of price on the offers that will be made by the candidates for the contract, but I am persuaded that the loss upon that head will be more than compensated to the Company by the encouragement which will be given to the ryots to extend the cultivation of the poppy, and by the measures which have been adopted being calculated to promote the general prosperity of the districts in which it is produced.

I thought that upon the whole it would be more beneficial for the Company that the Benares opium should also be provided in future by contract, and it is accordingly offered to the fairest bidder on the present occasion, under nearly the same conditions for securing good treatment to the ryots as those that are prescribed for Bahar and Bengal.

An infamous traffic has, it seems, been carried on in this country by the low Portuguese, and even by several foreign European seafaring people and traders, in purchasing and collecting native children in a clandestine manner, and exporting them for sale to the French islands and other parts of India.

I have at different times taken steps to prevent the continuance of practices which are so shocking to humanity and so pernicious to your interests, and in order to deter all persons under the authority of this Government from being concerned in that species of trade, I lately directed that a commander of a country vessel, who carried off some children last winter, should be prosecuted criminally before the Supreme Court; and I likewise published a proclamation to give notice that any person living under the Company's protection, or in any shape under the authority of this Government, who shall be convicted of carrying on, or aiding or abetting, the barbarous traffic that I have

mentioned, will be certain of meeting with the most exemplary punishment.

There are many obstacles in the way against abolishing slavery entirely in the Company's dominions, as the number of slaves is considerable, and the practice is sanctioned both by the Mahomedan and Hindoo laws.

I have, however, a plan under consideration, which I hope to be able to execute without doing much injury to the private interests, or offering great violence to the feelings of the natives, and which has for its object the abolition of the practice under certain limitations, and the establishing some rules and regulations to alleviate as much as may be possible the misery of those unfortunate people during the time that they may be retained in that wretched situation.

The system for the administration of criminal justice under the direction of a Naib Nazim has long attracted my serious attention, and is in my opinion in a most exceptionable state.

I am sufficiently sensible that great caution will be necessary in endeavouring to reform so delicate a branch of the civil Government; but I feel myself called upon by the principles of humanity and a regard for the honour and interest of the Company and the nation, not to leave this Government without endeavouring to take measures to prevent in future, on one hand the cruel punishments of mutilation which are frequently inflicted by the Mahomedan law, and on the other to restrain the spirit of corruption which so generally prevails in native courts, and by which wealthy offenders are generally enabled to purchase impunity for the most atrocious crimes.

In making such alterations as may appear to be necessary for effecting the above-mentioned purposes, you may be assured that the utmost care shall be taken to render the expense as light as possible to the Company.

I conceive that all regulations for the reform of that department would be useless and nugatory whilst the execution of them depends upon any native whatever, and that it will be indispensable for the good government of

this country that there should be general jail deliveries once or twice a year, and that two or three respectable Company's servants should be selected to act as superintendents of the criminal trials which may be conducted, under their inspection, by native judges, with the assistance of learned Moulavies and Pundits, in strict conformity to the laws and customs of Hindostan.

Should these appointments appear to be expedient after further consideration, some reduction may be made in the present establishment of the Foujedarry department, from which the amount of the salaries that it will be proper to allot to the superintendents may in part be defrayed.

The salaries, however, ought at all events to be liberal, as upon the general principles that have been already applied to the arrangement of the other departments the income of the superintendents should be limited to fixed and open allowances, without receiving any kind of perquisite whatever.

In establishing these principles for regulating the allowances of your servants in all the branches of your service, I trust that I have acted upon the soundest maxims of public economy.

It is neither your expectation, nor would it be possible, to obtain the services of men of experience, ability, and character in this climate, where a continuation of health is so precarious, without granting them rewards in some shape sufficiently liberal to enable them to live in a decent and comfortable manner, and to make such annual savings as to give them a prospect of being able in a moderate number of years to return to spend the latter part of their days in easy circumstances at home.

The generality of men would prefer making such a fortune by means the most open and avowed, and no mode can be more honourable than that of annual savings from an established public salary.

When the allowed salaries are evidently inadequate to the above purposes, and in a country where your principal servants are surrounded with temptations, it could not

easily be denied that it seemed to be expected, though not regularly sanctioned by Government, that they should look to some other sources of income; and in the pursuit of unauthorised gain by individuals in this country the public finances have often suffered great injury, and the poor natives in many instances very cruel oppressions.

The toleration of perquisites is likewise detrimental to the discipline of the service, for even when there is only an implied permission to take them, it is not easy to punish abuses, as after a beginning is suffered, distinct limits are with difficulty prescribed for the practice; but when liberal salaries are allowed and accepted as a complete compensation for services, a Government can, without scruple, disgrace and remove from their offices all those servants who shall be detected in deviations from the straight line of private honour and of public duty. . . .

The public credit of this Government has improved beyond the most sanguine hopes that I could have indulged a twelvemonth ago. The discount upon our certificates has not for some time past amounted to one and a half per cent. . . .

I received a letter from Mr. James Macpherson, who styles himself agent for the Nabob of Arcot, enclosing a long remonstrance against the decision of this Government in the succession to the late Rajah of Tanjore. I enclose a copy of my answer to Mr. Macpherson, which will I trust meet with your approbation.

I am, etc.,  
CORNWALLIS.

EARL CORNWALLIS TO MAJOR PALMER.

FORT WILLIAM,  
*August 26, 1789.*

SIR,

Candour obliges me to acknowledge that the Vizier's general conduct towards Scindia for several years past must have been considered by the latter as unaccommodating, and to a certain degree provoking. But at the same time great allowance should be made for the feelings of a Prince

of his Excellency's rank and dignity at having been witness for a train of successive years of the perseverance with which Scindia has pursued schemes of unbounded ambition and avarice in Hindostan.

I cannot therefore admit, upon the most partial consideration of their relative situations, that Scindia's complaints against the Vizier are founded upon such valid grounds as to justify his throwing threats out of public resentment.

For though I do not approve of his Excellency's showing countenance or furnishing shelter to Scindia's professed political enemies, yet as those men have only become his enemies in consequence of his own ambition and a systematic plan of encroachment, the protection which may have been offered to some of them by the Vizier cannot be viewed by any means in so offensive a light as if they had been native Marattas, or had been for a considerable time in a state of submission to the Maratta Government.

It will be proper that you should take an early opportunity to discuss this subject fully with Scindia; and after claiming the credit, to which we have so just a title, for the sincerity with which I have adhered to my professions to him since my arrival in India, and which he has experienced in the most substantial manner, by the strict neutrality which this Government has observed during several delicate and intricate turns in his affairs, you will convey to him the substance of what I have stated, in the most friendly and conciliatory language. I should wish you at the same time to be at pains to explain to him that, although the general principles of his own political conduct ought, in my opinion, to render him cautious in preferring public complaints against the Vizier of the nature of those that have been lately under discussion, yet that I am ready to allow that his Excellency's behaviour to him on several occasions has not been entirely blameless. And you may assure him that from that consideration, as well as from my personal regard for him, and my respect for the Maratta State, I shall always be ready to interpose my good offices with the Vizier, to obtain his acquiescence to all Scindia's reasonable

requests. But you will always endeavour to make Scindia sensible that, should his Excellency's aversion to such compliances as I may from time to time recommend, prove invincible by means of persuasion, it would not only be indelicate, but highly unjustifiable in me to employ any other mode to induce an ally, with whom we are connected by the strictest ties of friendship and mutual interests, to comply with requisitions which, in my own opinion, cannot in strict justice be demanded from him. . . .

Should Scindia, contrary to my expectations, declare that he will not overlook (or depend entirely on my interference to endeavour to procure redress for) any future similar grounds of complaint that may be furnished by the conduct of the Vizier, and should think proper to express a resolution to show his resentment by any public acts, you are to recommend to him in civil but in the most explicit terms, to weigh very maturely the consequences that may follow his executing such a determination; and notify to him, in a manner that cannot be misapprehended, that I shall consider any act of injury or insult to the Vizier or his subjects, precisely in the same light as if it had been offered to any of the immediate subjects or dominions of the Company. . . .

The particular circumstance of Scindia's having become a principal on the side of the Marattas in the late treaty of peace, and the long connexion which has now subsisted between him and this Government, has hitherto rendered it expedient to station a Resident with him, though I must confess that it is somewhat problematical whether the measure is necessary or advantageous to the Company.

From the authority which seems to have been delegated by the Peshwa's Government to Ali Behaudur<sup>1</sup> and Tunkojee

<sup>1</sup> Ali Behaudur, grandson of the Peshwa Baji Rao by a Mohammedan woman. He was in the service of the reigning Peshwa, and was sent by Nana Furnavese with an army to join Sindia in his invasion of Hindustan. After separating from him, he made conquests for himself in Bundelkund, which, after his death in 1802 at the siege of Kalinjar, were seized by the Peshwa and Sindia. They are now mostly in the possession of the Company, but his descendants are still nabobs of Banda in Bundelkund.

Holkar to interfere with Scindia in the management of the Maratta interests in Hindostan, it appears to be more than probable that he may resolve to relinquish that scene altogether, and either return to his own territories or repair to Poona, to endeavour to recover any credit that he may have lost with the principal members of the Peshwa's administration.

Should he come to either determination, you are not to accede to any proposition for your remaining with both, or with either of the other Maratta chiefs; but when Scindia shall be ready to depart, you are to take leave of him with every possible public mark and demonstration of cordiality and friendship, and to proceed with your assistant and escort and suite with all convenient despatch to Benares, where you will receive such further instructions as may be judged proper by this Government.

I am etc.,

CORNWALLIS.

PART V  
*ARMY ADMINISTRATION*

MARQUIS CORNWALLIS TO THE RIGHT HON. HENRY  
DUNDAS.

LONDON,  
*November 7, 1794.*

SIR,

1. I have had the honour to receive your letter dated September 1, requesting me to give my opinion on the best mode of new-modelling the army in India, with a view to give safety and permanence to our Indian Empire, and to prevent the continuance or revival of those discontents and jealousies which have so often manifested themselves between the King's and Company's troops, as well as between the Company's troops belonging to the different Presidencies in that part of the world.

2. Having been informed by a letter which I received from you before I left India, that this arrangement would be postponed till my return to this country, I took the opportunity of the leisure which was afforded me on my passage to Europe, and since my landing in England I have employed much of my thoughts in reflecting very deliberately on this important and complicated subject; and the following plan, being the result of those reflections, is now submitted to your consideration.

3. I am not so confident in my opinions as to imagine that they will not admit of many material alterations and improvements; but I can assure you that in arranging my ideas on a subject in which the interests, wishes, and prejudices of a great number of individuals, and the interests of the East India Company and of the nation at large, are



so intimately concerned and blended, I have endeavoured to divest my mind of every kind of partiality and prejudice, and that, in stating the principles and regulations of this plan, it has been my intention, according to the best of my judgment, to pay equal regard to the present and future just rights of officers serving in a distant and unhealthy climate, and to a consideration of the means which I conceive will be necessary to give a reasonable prospect of securing the permanent possession of our valuable Asiatic territories to the British nation.

4. The Company's military arrangements have by no means kept pace with the gradual increase of their territories, and the consequent occasional augmentations of their establishments; and the defects in the constitution of the army are now of a nature that, unless remedied, they would soon render the officers in general no less discontented with their situations, than unfit for the discharge of the duties which may be necessary for the protection of the British interests in India.

5. Previous to my proposing remedies for these defects, I shall take a general view of the present constitution, and of some of the usages in the Company's army; and after proposing the new establishments, and explaining the principles on which my recommendations are founded, I shall suggest several regulations which appear to me to be indispensably necessary for carrying those propositions into complete effect. . . .

Lord Cornwallis then proceeds to describe the existing state of the Indian army. The promotion was by seniority, regulated by the vacancies in each Presidency. There were no Generals, and only fifty-two field-officers out of upwards of 1,000 officers, exclusive of cavalry, engineers, and artillery. Thus the hope of promotion—so powerful an engine in animating the exertions of military men—was so slight that few could expect to attain the rank of colonel while fit for active service.

No officer, even if compelled from bad health to solicit a short furlough, could return to Europe without resigning

his commission; and if he remained in Europe beyond a very limited time, he could not be readmitted into the service. Should he be allowed to return to India, he was seconded, upon greatly diminished pay and allowances, until a vacancy occurred in his own rank. Those permanently quitting the service had no retirement, except the pittance they could derive from Lord Clive's Fund. Under these circumstances officers had often been forced, in order to realise independent fortunes, to have recourse to means incompatible with the principles which should actuate military men.

The native infantry differed in many points from the European; from the ranks of the latter, the former were supplied with European commissioned and non-commissioned officers, who were generally selected with great care. Hence the remaining officers took but little pains with their European soldiers, who were almost universally recruited from a class far inferior to those who filled the ranks of the King's regiments.

The artillery, having the choice of all the Company's recruits, was well composed. The officers of engineers generally good, but with little experience. The native cavalry too few in number to deserve any particular notice. In the Madras Presidency the cavalry were generally, and in the Bengal Presidency almost entirely, composed of Mahometans. In all the Presidencies the infantry were mostly Hindoos, with a few Christians on the coast of Coromandel, and a few Jews on the coast of Malabar. Great differences existed both in language and customs, but the men were in every case much attached to their respective countries and kindred. With regard to the pay of all ranks, and gratuities to captains and subalterns, there was little or no difference in the several Presidencies. But such was not the case as to batta. The allowances varied from no batta at all in Bombay to double full batta at some of the Bengal stations; and as in many cases the allowances were smallest where the price of provisions was highest, there seemed to be no means of accounting for

these differences except from the state of the finances of the respective Presidencies. Such want of uniformity in the systems naturally produced jealousy and discontent to a very serious extent. . . .

30. The climate of India, and several customs that cannot easily be altered, expose European officers to some articles of expense, which are not indispensably requisite in other parts of the world where British troops are stationed; and it will therefore be necessary to attend to those considerations in fixing their allowances; but as the following propositions for new-modelling the army are calculated not only for putting the officers of the Indian army on an equal footing with those of the King's troops serving in different parts of the world in their future prospects of promotion, but also for enabling them to visit their native country occasionally during the period of their service, and ultimately to return to spend the latter part of their days in it, with every convenience and advantage which is enjoyed by the officers of the British army in general, the necessity of their endeavouring to acquire independent fortunes in India, for the purpose of securing those high gratifications, will no longer exist.

31. From the unfortunate propensity to intemperance which is so general amongst all the European soldiers in India, I am clear in opinion that allowances beyond what will procure for them the real comforts of life in abundance (for which half batta in addition to their pay, in peace, and in almost any situation in war, would be fully sufficient), would not only be unadvisable in regard to the public finances, but pernicious to the soldiers themselves; and the pay of all ranks of the native troops is so ample, both in proportion to their own wants and habits of living, and to the pay which is allowed the troops in the service of the Native Powers, that it can seldom be necessary to allow any batta, and never more than half-batta, to the troops of that description.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> By this it was never intended to deprive such of the Native troops of *half batta* as have hitherto enjoyed it.

32. The foregoing general statement of the constitution and allowances of the army will show some of the defects of the Company's military system, which in several essential points is totally different from the internal constitution and many of the usages of the King's army; and as I am most decidedly of opinion that the Company's possessions in India cannot be secured without the assistance of a considerable body of His Majesty's troops, I shall not hesitate to declare that I do not conceive it possible that any system can be devised which would have a permanent and useful effect for the satisfaction of the individuals of both services, and for the public good, unless, as a preliminary measure, the whole of our force in India, as well Native as European, shall be transferred to His Majesty's service, and, with a few modifications, be regulated and conducted in future according to the rules which have long operated in the King's army.

33. It must, however, at the same time be clearly understood that all His Majesty's troops serving in India are to be perfectly subordinate to the Company's Governments in that country, and to obey all orders that they may receive either directly from those Governments, or through them from the Court of Directors.

34. The new arrangement that I shall propose for the Indian army will therefore be founded upon the supposition that the above measure will be adopted; and as I am strongly impressed with a conviction that it will be of essential importance to the interests of Britain that Europeans should be discouraged and prevented as much as possible from colonising and settling in our possessions in India, I look upon it to be highly expedient that it should be a fundamental principle in the new system, not only to relieve the corps of European troops frequently, but also to secure the return of all military men who may be entitled to any provision from the public to their mother country, by rendering all pensions and allowances to them after they are worn out, or may have been permitted to retire from the service, payable to those only who shall actually claim them in Europe.

35. The pernicious effects upon the state of the European regiments, which have been already experienced, and would ever be felt from the frequent removals of officers from European to native corps, would alone induce me to recommend that these two branches of the service should be entirely separated, and no interchange of officers be in future admitted between them; but should frequent reliefs take place in the European branch, an additional objection would arise to the appointment of officers to native corps from European regiments, in opening a possible door to the abuse of patronage in a Commander-in-Chief, by putting it in his power to give an officer just arrived from Europe, who has had no opportunity to acquire the language, or the least knowledge of the manners and customs of the natives, an advantageous situation in the native branch of the service, which might be attended with the most ruinous consequences to the public interest.

It is true that in point of qualification for the duties of an European regiment there could be no material objection to the removal of officers from the native to the European branch; but as it is proposed that the officers of the native branch shall have a prospect of equal advantage in their own line with the officers of the European branch, it would become unjust to allow the former to interfere with the promotion of those who are not suffered to enjoy a reciprocal advantage.

37. No distinction should, in my opinion, be made either in the mode of promotion of officers, or in any other respect, between the Company's European troops that may be transferred to the King's service, and those of the corresponding branches which at present compose His Majesty's army; but some deviations from the rules that are sufficiently suitable to the European troops will be necessary in the native branch of the service, particularly in regard to the promotion of officers, which I recommend to be made (with certain exceptions that will be proposed under the head of Native Establishments) by regimental seniority as far as the rank of Major, and afterwards by seniority in the

line at each Presidency: because I conceive it to be improbable that the indulgence of a temporary leave of absence which the officers of the native troops will enjoy, in common with those of the European regiments, will afford them the same advantage of obtaining support from their connexions at home as the others may derive from a more permanent residence near them, in consequence of the occasional reliefs of the European corps; and I therefore think that the officers whose services are unalterably fixed in so distant a quarter of the globe ought to be protected by established regulations against the hazard of suffering by the abuse of patronage in any Commander-in-Chief.

38. I am perfectly aware that the assistance of European non-commissioned officers is extremely convenient to the officers of the native corps; and, when proper non-commissioned officers can be found, that they are in several respects of substantial use in that branch of the service; but as I know that in an European regiment it is seldom possible to find a sufficient number of sober and properly-qualified men to fill its own establishments of non-commissioned officers, and it would be unreasonable to expect that the European regiments would consent to derange their own internal economy and discipline, by parting with careful non-commissioned officers, I shall not propose that description of men as part of the native establishment; and as I shall recommend a considerable augmentation of commissioned European officers to the native troops, I do not apprehend that this alteration can occasion any material detriment to the service.

39. It is also proper to observe that it is impracticable to procure, in a short time, a considerable number of men of proper caste, and of sufficient size and strength for the duties of a soldier, for the native troops on the Madras and Bombay establishments; and that on the contrary, an unlimited number of men of the best quality for native soldiers may at any time be raised in a very short period for the Bengal troops, from the populous provinces in that quarter of the Company's dominions.

40. I shall therefore recommend a lower establishment for each of the companies of the Bengal troops during peace than for those of the Madras and Bombay establishments, because on any emergency there can be no difficulty in augmenting them at the shortest warning.

41. Considering the state of the other Powers of India, the great extent and value of our possessions, and the long period which must unavoidably elapse before assistance can be sent from Europe, it does not appear advisable that any material reduction should be made in the number of the men, either Europeans or natives, that are now employed in India. In order, however, to remedy the radical defects of the present establishments, some additional expense must be incurred, but I trust that the increase will not be found considerable; and, in return, it is hoped that the proposed plan will sufficiently secure the attachment of the natives, afford an encouraging prospect to the desponding British officers, and render the European forces more useful and efficient for promoting and maintaining the interests of their country.

42. To effect these purposes, it is, in my opinion, necessary to lay down as fundamental principles that the European and native branches of the service (the Lascars excepted) should be entirely separated, and that the native establishments should continue distinct and separate, as at present, at the different Presidencies in India. I shall now give my sentiments with regard to the new establishments which I recommend. . . .

Lord Cornwallis then proceeds to recommend the following changes in the different branches of the service :

#### *The Artillery.*

The six battalions of Company's European artillery (30 companies) to be formed into three, and incorporated into the King's artillery, and the engineers to be treated in a similar manner, due regard being had in this arrangement to the just claims of the King's officers from their long standing in the service.

*Cavalry.*

The Madras Cavalry—five regiments—to be consolidated into four, forming one brigade, with five field-officers among them.

Supernumerary officers to be seconded till they succeed to vacancies.

Officers on leave in Europe to draw their pay, but not their allowances, which should go to the officers discharging their duties.

The Governor-General's body-guard to remain on the existing footing.

Officers under the rank of Colonel may, after serving a certain number of years, retire on full pay, or, with permission, sell their commissions.

If a Lieutenant-Colonel should retire on full pay, the senior Major in the brigade to succeed, but the vacancies so made to be filled up by regimental promotion.

*European Infantry.*

The 12 battalions of 8 companies each to be formed into 8 of 10 companies: Bengal, 4; Madras, 3; and Bombay, 1. Three field-officers, 8 Captains, 29 subalterns, besides staff, and 850 rank and file, besides serjeants and drummers, in each battalion.

The rules in the King's service as to promotion and sale of commissions to be observed in these corps.

All soldiers already enlisted to be permitted to complete their engagements, if they think fit, according to their original stipulations, and non-commissioned officers in native regiments to remain there, to be seconded on the European regiments as the Commander-in-Chief may think fit.

European soldiers to be encouraged, if fit for service, to remain in India when their regiments go home, and a bounty to be paid if they re-enlist.

*Native Infantry.*

The native regiments to be formed into 26 (*sic*) regiments of 2 battalions each, and in each battalion 10 companies:



12 at Bengal, 10 at Madras, and 2 at Bombay.<sup>1</sup> The establishment of each battalion in Bengal to be 45 European officers and 1,702 native officers and men.

In Madras and Bombay 200 native privates more.

The allowances to be generally according to the existing system in Bengal, but to be called 'India pay.'

Paymasters to be nominated as in the King's service, and allowances for repair of arms, etc., to be as in the King's regiments.

All officers, of whatever rank, to be allowed to sell their regimental commissions on retiring from the service, without reference to any brevet rank they may hold.

Off-reckonings to be for the benefit of the Colonel.

The Bombay Marine battalion to remain on its existing footing.

Arrangements to be made for giving an option to the medical officers to remain as civil servants of the Company, or to enter into the military branch. And, as all sale of commissions in this class must be strictly prohibited, pensions to be granted on retirement, varying from £150 to £500, according to rank and length of service.

#### *Chaplains.*

To be regulated on the same principles as the medical officers.

Detailed regulations were suggested for the Lascars and other unimportant branches of the service.

Provisions to be made for an immediate supply of cadets to fill vacancies caused by the new arrangements.

Pay and allowances, when not specially mentioned, to be the same as among the King's troops. . . .

108. All officers belonging to the Company's cavalry and infantry under the rank of Colonel who, consistently with the standing regulations, can be readmitted into the army, and may hereafter obtain leave from His Majesty (in the place of the Court of Directors) to return to India, to serve

<sup>1</sup> The result of the organisation was 12 at Bengal, 11 at Madras, 4 at Bombay, and a Marine battalion.

with such corps as the Commander-in-Chief or the Commander of the Forces at the Presidency to which they belong may think proper, and to receive the pay and allowances of their rank until vacancies in the native establishment shall fall for them. It has been proposed that field officers should have rank in the line at each Presidency. Lieutenant-Colonels and Majors will therefore take their proper place in the list at the Presidency to which they belong upon their arrival. But to do justice to the Captains and subalterns now in Europe, who may not be able to avail themselves of the opportunity of being placed in the new corps at their first foundation according to their standing in the service, I propose that they shall be exempted from the effect of the rule which is to apply to officers who exchange from one regiment to another after the new arrangement shall have taken place; and that when vacancies fall for them in their respective ranks, they shall come into the corps in which such vacancies may fall, according to their original standing in the service at the Presidency to which they belong. . . .

III. The great promotion in all ranks of the Company's service which would immediately take place on the adoption of the proposed arrangement, even if the officers were to be confined to the native service alone, without being admitted into the eight European regiments which are henceforward to be incorporated into the general mass of the British army, renders it absolutely necessary to pay some attention to the officers of the King's regiments now serving in India—who must on this occasion suffer a most mortifying supersession; who, from the distance of their situation, have been in a great measure precluded from participating in the rapid preferment which has generally taken place in other corps of the British army in consequence of the present war, and who have at least as many grievances in point of promotion at present to complain of as any part of the Company's army; although I admit that if the existing system was to continue, the case of the latter, and especially of those of the Bengal establishment, would become most

deplorable. I am therefore clearly of opinion that as, exclusive of the promotions that will take place in the corps of artillery and engineers, an addition will be made by the new arrangement in the native line of infantry only, of fourteen Colonels to the Company's present establishment in India, the preference should be given, in the disposal of the eight European regiments, to the officers of the rank of Colonel in the King's army who served in the Mysore war, before those of the Company's service of an inferior rank; which, at the same time that it must be considered as an act of justice due to officers who filled very high and important stations during that critical period, would afford a means of bringing forward the senior officers of the succeeding ranks, who have in general long services to plead, and who must severely feel a total neglect of their pretensions, at a time that so much consideration is shown to the merits and claims of every part of the military establishment in India.

112. Upon the new establishment being completed, lists of all the Company's officers who shall have come into the King's service to be transmitted to the War Office, particularly specifying the dates of their brevet commissions of King's rank; and it will, in my opinion, be reasonable and just that a retrospect should then be had to those dates, and that the same advanced rank by the brevet should be given to officers above the rank of subaltern which they would have obtained if they had been previously in the list of the King's army, in consequence of any general brevets that have been granted by His Majesty since 9th July, 1783.

113. The same rule to be followed with regard to the Company's officers now in England who may hereafter obtain leave from His Majesty (in the place of the Court of Directors) to return to India, to be readmitted into the army; and not only the Colonels to be in future promoted in their turn to take the rank of General Officers, but all other officers are likewise to be considered as equally entitled with those of the rest of His Majesty's troops to be included in any brevet promotion that the King may be

pleased occasionally to make in their respective ranks; but, conformable to the practice of His Majesty's service, a Colonel is not to vacate his regiment by his promotion to the rank of General Officer, nor are any other officers who may obtain promotion by brevet to have a claim to higher pay than that of their regimental rank.

114. All officers at present in the Company's service who shall arrive at the rank of General Officers to be eligible to serve His Majesty in any part of the world. . . .

The next subjects entered upon were the reduction of military expenses, the reformation of existing abuses, and the rendering the military department sufficiently subordinate to the civil government.

Lord Cornwallis thought it highly necessary that the rank and authority of the person entrusted with the charge of so large a portion of His Majesty's forces should be upheld as much as possible; and he advised that to him alone should be given the title of Commander-in-Chief, and that commanding officers at the subordinate settlements should be styled "Commanding Officer of the Forces at Madras," "Bombay," etc.; they, by authority of the Court of Directors, having seats as second in Council, except when the offices of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief happened to be united in the same person.

All Company's infantry officers were to choose between the European and native branches of the service; and should there be a larger number for either than could be at once provided for, preference to be given to seniors in each rank, and supernumeraries to be *en second*, with pay and allowances until absorbed.

In arranging the new cavalry and infantry establishments, officers to be appointed according to seniority; but in future, Captains and subalterns exchanging must enter their new regiments as juniors in their respective ranks. . . .

120. In order to prevent abuse of the indulgence of leave of absence to Europe by officers prolonging their stay at home upon improper pretexts, or making use of intrigue and private interest to obtain a renewal of their leave, it

ought to be an established rule that ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> pay of all officers under the rank of Colonel, whether of the European or native branch of the service, should be stopped after the expiration of the period which has been proposed for their leave of absence from India; and, to render all solicitation ineffectual for the recovery of such pay it should, when stopped, become immediately the property of some charity fund in India.

121. Should the stoppage of pay prove inefficacious for inducing officers to return without further loss of time to their duty in India, the names of such of them as shall prolong their stay in Europe two years beyond the above-mentioned period are, without admitting any excuse whatever, to be struck out of the list of the army as having resigned the service, and their vacancies to be filled up according to the standing regulations. . . .

The following articles provided that officers appointed to regiments in India (if not on the strength of the additional company) must embark within two years after being gazetted. In consideration of the incidental expenses, Indian officers appointed to the staff are, as a general rule, to continue upon it for four years. Staff officers, besides their liberal pay, to receive allowances in time of peace for travelling expenses, camp-equipage, etc., with an increase in time of war.

Leave may be given to General Officers and Colonels of regiments in India not required on the staff to reside in Europe; but neither there nor in India will they receive more than regimental pay and the profits of the off-reckoning fund.

The army to continue furnishing officers to fill the posts of Military Auditor-General, Judge-Advocates, Fort-Majors and Adjutants, General Commissioners of Stores, etc., etc.; but all so employed to be on the strength of some European or Native regiment: no officer, after the embarkation of his own regiment, being permitted to hold any staff office in India excepting those of Military Auditor-General or deputy, Adjutant and Quarter-Master General or deputies; Fort-

Major or Adjutant, and A.D.C., staff officers having certain indulgences as to visiting Europe. . . .

135. As the above propositions not only secure a competent income to the military officers serving in India during the early periods of their service, but also the substantial advantage and gratification of an opening being made for their attaining high military rank, as well as the indulgence of being enabled to visit Europe occasionally without relinquishing their pay, and the satisfaction of having it in their power to spend the latter part of their lives in their native country, either by retiring on their full pay, by selling their commissions, or by remaining in service until they obtain the command and emoluments of a regiment—all ideas must be given up in the army of looking for perquisites or advantages in any shape whatever beyond the open, avowed allowances which shall be allotted to the respective ranks; and if any officer shall be detected in making such attempt, he ought to be tried by a General Court Martial for behaving in a manner unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman, and, if convicted, be dismissed from the service.

136. The collection of bazar duties, and the practice in some parts of India of making usurious loans, at country stations, to aumildars, zemindars, and other natives, being two of the most objectionable of the modes by which officers have acquired emoluments in India, are to be particularly pointed out to them as being strictly prohibited; and any officer who shall be convicted before a General Court Martial of having disgraced himself and the character of his profession by having been guilty of either of those practices ought to be dismissed from the service, and, if possible, to be obliged to refund the money that he may have acquired by such unworthy means.

137. The only exception from the above regulation should be made in the case of an army or detachment upon actual service in the field during the war; when the Commanding Officer may be permitted to levy a moderate duty upon spirits and intoxicating drugs, for the purpose of re-

straining the excessive use of those articles, and of raising a fund for defraying the expenses of the conduct and management of the public bazars of that army or detachment.

138. No duty ought, in any case whatever, to be levied in military bazars, except upon spirits and intoxicating drugs. . . .

In the next articles frequent change of quarters and stations was enjoined, as tending to improve the discipline of the native troops, and to lessen the temptations of officers to make loans, etc. No officer under the rank of Colonel to retain command at any station from whence his corps is removed.

Allowances to field-officers, called revenue-money, or commission on revenue, to be discontinued, because, comparatively with their brother officers in different parts of the world their income is competent to their station; and as the indulgences from which they will derive essential benefit increase the Company's expenses, it is just to make this saving.

Allowances for camp-equipage and carriage to be continued to Sepoy officers in Bengal, and extended to other parts of the Company's possessions, where regular reliefs by land can be established. Fixed allowance to be given to certain officers in lieu of the lascars, etc., furnished to them.

The Company to pay the passages of officers sent to and from India. Efficacious measures to be taken to repress exorbitant charges, and to secure, on reasonable terms, passages in the Company's ships for officers, whether such passages are paid for by themselves or by the Company.

The Commander-in-Chief to have the sole power of granting leave of absence to Europe, transmitting the particulars to the Supreme Government, and Governments of the respective Presidencies.

The rule requiring officers to produce certificates of having satisfied all public demands before they can retire or go home on leave, to continue in force.

No augmentations or reductions of the army in India to be made except by instructions from England, or by explicit orders from the Supreme Government, addressed to the Commander-in-Chief, and to the Governments and Commanding Officers at the subordinate Presidencies. Regiments and detachments not to be moved, nor any general reliefs or movements of troops to take place, without the express consent of the Supreme Government.

No additions to be made to military allowances in India without the express consent of the Court of Directors.

Annual demands for ordnance and other stores to be transmitted as usual by the Company's Government to the Court of Directors: such stores to be furnished by the Company, or, on the requisition of the Court of Directors, by the Board of Ordnance, the Company paying the freight, etc.

The Court of Directors and Company's Government to retain complete power to examine and control all contingent charges, etc.

Should the Military Boards at the different Presidencies (after the transfer of the army to the King's service) not appear sufficiently dependent upon the Company's Governments to ensure minute obedience to their orders for enforcing rigid economy, these Governments may establish other Boards, or adopt any measures they think necessary.

No persons who are not descended on both sides from European parents can be admitted into the European branch of the service except as drummers, fifers, or other musicians: nor can such persons be hereafter admitted on the establishment of European officers in native troops, though those already in may remain. . . .

158. In order to prevent, as far as may be practicable, the pernicious effects of dissensions or of want of subordination in the military department to the civil Governments, at so great a distance from the seat of Government of the British Empire, the Company's Governments in India to be authorised to suspend and send home, in the most summary manner, any officer of the army, from the highest to the



lowest rank, when they shall think it necessary for the public good.

159. The charge against an officer so suspended or sent home to be examined in the manner that His Majesty may be pleased to direct ; and the respective Governments by which such measures may have been adopted are to be responsible for their conduct to the Court of Directors ; but every attempt in a military officer to resist the authority of any of the Governments in India to be rendered highly criminal.

160. The subordinate Governments are not, however, to proceed to the extremity of sending home an officer of the army without previously obtaining the approbation and sanction of the Supreme Government, unless the circumstances of the case should be of so extraordinary and dangerous a nature as obviously to justify the adoption of so strong a measure.

161. In new-modelling the army, attention must be paid to the existing charitable institutions at the different Presidencies for taking care of the children of European officers and soldiers.

162. The numbering of the eight new regiments relative to each other to be determined by lot, by the direction of the Commander-in-Chief ; and in placing them on the general list of His Majesty's army, it is to be considered whether they are to precede or immediately follow the four regiments that were raised a few years ago for the service of India.

163. As it is proposed that the whole of the Company's military establishments to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope should be transferred from the Company to the Crown, it may also be thought expedient that the small body of troops stationed at the island of St. Helena should form a part of the King's army, and be occasionally relieved.

164. In proposing the above regulations, I have not presumed to suggest the authority by which they ought to be established ; but every means should be taken to render such of them as it may be thought proper to adopt efficient

and permanent; and I must likewise add that, in order to prevent contradictory instructions from being transmitted to India, and to preserve a systematic uniformity in conducting the business of that country, it appears to me indispensably necessary that all despatches from the public offices in Europe, all those addressed to them from India, and all despatches from the Commander-in-Chief in India, should pass through the office of His Majesty's confidential servant, for the time being, for the India department.

I have, etc.,

CORNWALLIS.

## PART VI

### GENERAL AFFAIRS

#### THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL IN COUNCIL TO THE COURT OF DIRECTORS

*July 31, 1787.*

HONOURABLE SIRS,

. . . In the 70th paragraph of your General Instructions of the 12th April, 1786, you were pleased to approve the idea generally suggested, of paying the servants employed in the collection of the revenues partly by a salary and partly by commission, but that the latter should form the greater part of their allowance; you also left it to us to determine whether these allowances should be proportioned according to the rank of the servants.

In carrying these instructions into execution, we have not strictly conformed to the letter of them for reasons which we doubt not you will approve, and which we have now the honour to explain.

The responsibility appeared to us as the fairest and most eligible principle for fixing the commission. We considered the salaries of the collectors as the means of the[ir] subsistence, and the commission in the nature of a reward. If the principle of seniority of service only had been adopted for regulating the latter, a servant who had charge of the collection of ten lacs of rupees would often be entitled to receive more than another collector superintending revenues to three times this amount. To remedy this inequality, and adhere to the principle suggested by you as far as regards the commission, it would have been necessary to appoint invariably the oldest servant to the greatest charge—

a rule which, from the disparity of ability, knowledge, and application in the servants employed in the collections, must have been attended with great detriment to your interests, and would have occasioned the removal of all the officers employed in the collections.

With respect to the allowances of the collectors, it is to be observed that the expenses of a collector, as far as may be deemed necessary, rather depend upon their situation as more or less exposed to the intercourse of a large society than on any other cause; and, notwithstanding the liberality of the allowances granted, there are situations which will require both care and economy to render them sufficient for the expenses of the collectors, although in others they ought to supply an excess beyond what they may be entitled to from their comparative claims in the service. Upon the whole, we deemed it best to fix them at one general rate; the duties of a collector in the most confined situation will require his whole time and attention—in some, perhaps, will be more than he can accurately perform.

The rates of the commission are particularly detailed in the proceedings referred to. You will observe that the whole will fall rather short of 1 per cent. on the actual collections, and we estimate the amount of it at about 244,000 rupees per annum, to be divided in different proportions amongst the several officers employed in the collections. The largest possible amount receivable by any collector will not exceed the sum of 27,500 rupees per annum. We advert particularly to Burdwan, the collections of which, estimated at 45 lacs, will yield the commission above specified.

When you consider the situations of your servants in this country, the very high responsibility now more particularly annexed to the office of a collector, the temptations of the situation, the incessant labours of his office, and the zeal which must be exerted to promote the prosperity of the revenues and country at large; when, on the other hand, you advert to the solemn restrictions imposed upon him by the Legislature, as well as those in the Public Regulations, and

the separate orders already noticed, absolutely precluding him from any emolument whatever excepting such as are publicly allowed; and when you are further pleased to consider that, excepting instances of extraordinary merit, your servants cannot in future expect to obtain the office of a collector under a period of twelve years spent in your service, we trust that we shall be found to have consulted your true interests with every compatible attention to economy, and that you will approve the allowances and commission fixed by us for your servants in the revenue department.

We have, etc.,

CORNWALLIS.<sup>1</sup>

EARL CORNWALLIS TO THE SECRET COMMITTEE OF  
THE COURT OF DIRECTORS.

ON THE GANGES,

*August 19, 1787.*

GENTLEMEN,

. . . With your explicit instructions before us, we could be at no loss respecting our conduct in any disputes that could arise with the French Government in India. The intemperate stile of M. de Souillac's letter appeared to me extremely improper for our imitation, but I trust that you will approve of our answer to it. I wish earnestly, however, to avoid, if possible, all further altercations with the subjects of that nation; and it will give me particular pleasure if the points upon which they have hitherto arisen can be finally adjusted in Europe. In that hope, and in the conviction that the dignity of this Government will not in the meantime suffer, I was induced to propose some delay in the execution of your order to resume the exercise of our right to search the French ships, and it will give me great satisfaction to know that it is not considered by you as an act of too much forbearance.

The result of my conferences with Hyder Beg Khan is

<sup>1</sup> All letters from the Governor-General in Council are signed by the Governor-General, and by one, generally by two, members of the Council. It has not been thought necessary to give the latter names.

fully stated in my letter to the Vizier, and by his Excellency's answer it is now rendered a final agreement between the two Governments. If I have deviated in any point from the letter of such of your instructions as apply to this negotiation, I trust it will appear that I have paid strict attention to their spirit and substance.

In adjusting the public account we have only given up a part of a large balance of difficult, if not impossible, recovery, and principally composed of articles to which our claims were neither sanctioned by your authority, nor ever admitted by him to be just; and by formally relinquishing all interference in the internal affairs and management of his Government, our connexion is reduced to plain and simple principles. We undertake the defence of his dominions against all foreign enemies upon receiving a subsidy equal to all the civil and military expenses that will be incurred by an engagement of so much value to him. Our commerce with Oude, but particularly the maintenance of a large body of troops in peace which, according to contingent events, may be usefully employed in time of war, are the great advantages that will result to us from those stipulations.

The orders to recall the Futtighur brigade, with which Hyder Beg was well acquainted, occasioned some embarrassment. It was not easy to make him comprehend that, by the late alterations in our military establishment, so small a force for the defence of Oude as one of our present brigades would greatly fall short of the intentions at home when those orders were given. I was, however, obliged by a sense of public duty to state to him my clear opinion that two brigades in Oude would be indispensably necessary for the mutual interest and safety of both Governments.

The loss of Colonel Baillie's,<sup>1</sup> and of several other

<sup>1</sup> Hyder, with his whole army, attacked this detachment near Perambacum, September 10, 1780. Colonel Baillie was killed, and nearly his whole corps—about 3,700 Europeans and natives—was destroyed. Among the few survivors, who were made prisoners, was Sir David Baird, not above three or four wounded sepoyes escaping. Colonel Baillie of Dunain was the head of that family.

detachments during the late war, has removed some part of that awe in which the natives formerly stood at the name of British troops. It will therefore, in future, be a prudent maxim never to hazard, if it can be avoided, so small a body as a brigade of sepoys with a weak European regiment at so great a distance from our other stations as the Dooab; and from the confused state of the Upper Provinces, it would be highly inadvisable in us to attempt the defence of the Vizier's extensive frontier without a respectable force. The principle being admitted to retain two brigades, there was no difficulty in arranging the extent of the subsidy.

I had no hesitation in adopting the plan that has been settled concerning Furruckabad. Our interference in that district has ever been highly offensive to the Vizier, it has in no degree promoted the interest or the satisfaction of Mozuffer Jung, and while it had produced no sort of advantage to the Company, I am afraid it has not much contributed to the credit of this Government in Hindostan. Upon resolving to withdraw our Resident, I considered it as highly proper to demand some stipulations in favour of Mozuffer Jung himself, and particularly to secure decent pensions for his mother, brother,<sup>1</sup> and late Dewan,<sup>2</sup> who had in several instances shown an attachment to our interests; and I have the pleasure to say that the Vizier has very readily acquiesced to all my propositions on these heads.

Our own communications with the Peshwa's ministers, though not approaching the nature of a close connexion or friendship, continue to be on the most civil footing; but whilst they were still chagrined at the disappointment of our promised assistance in the war with Tippoo, I thought it best to be cautious of making new offers which might hazard the dignity of this Government. By my letter to Mr. Malet dated 20th June, you will see that I have authorised him to give Nana an opening to propose some provisional engagements, to counteract such treaties and

<sup>1</sup> Dildeer Khan, afterwards Regent.

<sup>2</sup> Deep Chund, his Dewan, or Minister.

designs as have been said to subsist with the French and Tippoo; and our future steps will be regulated by the manner in which this advance has been received by Nana.

I have, etc.,

CORNWALLIS.

EARL CORNWALLIS TO THE RIGHT HON. HENRY DUNDAS.

*(Private.)*

BENARES DISTRICT,

August 26, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

There is nothing in the secret letter material, or that can alter the line of conduct which we have adopted; but I think the letter from the Court of Directors contains much false economy, and a great want of confidence in the Government here.

If the essence of the spirit of economy of the whole Court of Directors could be collected, I am sure it would fall very short of my earnest anxiety on that subject. But I never can or shall think it is good economy to put men into places of the greatest confidence, where they have it in their power to make their fortunes in a few months, without giving them any salaries.

If it is a maxim that no Government can command honest services, and that pay our servants as we please they will equally cheat, the sooner we leave this country the better. I am sure, under that supposition, I can be of no use, and my salary is so much thrown away: nothing will be so easy as to find a Governor-General of Bengal who will serve without a salary.

From the spirit of this letter I conclude that the commission given to the collectors, the allowances to the Residents at Oude and Benares, etc., will be all disapproved of. I see the pay of the Sub-Treasurer, which was given by Macpherson, is objected to. When I came I found the Sub-Treasurer playing with the deposits amounting to three or four lacs. I fancy of the two he had rather I had taken his salary from him.



I have saved since I came, upon the salt, upon the various contracts, upon remittances, balances, and jobs of different kinds, ten times, I may say fifty times, the amount of the salaries that are retrenched. I am doing everything I can to reform the Company's servants, to teach them to be more economical in their mode of living, and to look forward to a moderate competency; and I flatter myself I have not hitherto laboured in vain. But if all chance of saving any money and returning to England, without acting dishonestly is removed, there will be an end of my reformation.

Believe me, etc.,  
CORNWALLIS.

EARL CORNWALLIS TO THE COURT OF DIRECTORS.

*November 3, 1788.*

HONOURABLE SIRS,

The interests of your territories are now so much blended with those of the province of Oude, that in my opinion we are called upon, no less by considerations of private advantage than by a regard to the honour and credit of the nation, to pay the most liberal attention to every public measure that may tend to promote its prosperity. It was from these motives, as I have informed you, that I proposed last year to the Vizier to arrange a commercial treaty between the two Governments upon conditions of mutual benefit and of perfect equality; and I requested that his ministers should consider themselves at entire liberty to discuss the different articles with regard to their effect on the interests of his Excellency's dominions with the utmost deliberation and freedom. A copy of the treaty which, after much correspondence, was concluded in this manner, will be transmitted to you in the despatch from the Board. It is nearly conformable to the draft which was enclosed to you in my letter by the Rodney, and I am sanguine enough to hope that it will contribute to awaken a spirit of activity and industry in the country of Oude, whilst by facilitating our

communication with the Deccan and with the Upper Provinces of the Empire, many valuable sources of commerce will be opened or enlarged for the inhabitants of the Company's dominions.

The regulation and reform of the management of the province of Benares has likewise continued to occupy a great deal of my most earnest attention, as being an object which your immediate interests and the general principles of policy and humanity rendered it equally important to accomplish. Instead of entering in this place into detail of the evils that existed, and of the measures that have been adopted for encouraging the commerce and culture, and for securing happiness for the numerous inhabitants of that valuable zemindarry, I shall beg leave to refer you to the Resident's different letters, and to the Resolutions and Instructions of the Board upon them, in which you will find every interesting particular relating to the situation of Benares, as well as the motives which influenced our decisions and orders, fully and distinctly explained. After becoming acquainted with the alarming state of decay into which the country had fallen, and with the prevalent defects and vices in its internal government, I entertained no hope of obtaining a hearty concurrence and assistance from the Rajah in their correction, because I believed him to be, like most of the chiefs of this country, too jealous of his own personal importance to assent with sincerity to rules which included the very necessary regulation of his own conduct, and too little capable of comprehending the ruinous consequences to his own private interests which must ultimately arise from an irregular and capricious system of government. On the other hand, having no intention to attempt to increase the present revenue or actual power of the Company in Benares, I proceeded with confidence to authorize the measures of reformation which are described in the public records; and I hope they will, by promoting the improvement of commerce and cultivation, tend to give permanency to the Company's revenue, and to add considerably to the profits and income of the Rajah himself, whilst

I likewise trust that experience will prove that they have been well calculated to protect the mass of the inhabitants against the miseries, so common in this quarter of the globe, of oppression and injustice. From the great and constant resort of strangers to Benares, many of whom are persons of high rank or of eminent learning, it is there that the merits or defects of our government will be most conspicuous; and I am inclined to hope and believe that the praises of the Resident and the report of British moderation and justice will be conveyed to the most remote provinces of Hindostan.

Your orders for the abolition of the custom-house duties were, in as far as they directly affected the foreign nations, carried into execution immediately after they were received; and whilst the measure has undoubtedly removed many grounds for altercation with the Foreign Companies, I trust that in its effect it will also tend to the general encouragement of the commerce of the country.

I could, however, see no adequate general benefit that could arise from relinquishing the town duties of Calcutta, which amount annually to a very considerable sum. If it shall appear from experience that the duties of goods coming from the country are either oppressive to individuals or hurtful to the general commerce of the town, they will be lowered or entirely taken off. It was absolutely necessary that duties should be levied on the frontiers of Bahar at the rates which had been settled by our treaty with the Vizier, not merely on account of the sum which they will produce, but as a measure of policy, to give a reasonable protection to the manufactures of Bengal and Bahar against the importation of those of similar fabrics from the countries of Benares and Oude.

The fundamental objects of our plan were to curtail all unnecessary expenses, and to establish useful rules for simplifying and facilitating the despatch of all branches of the public business. Under the head of economy we proceeded to the abolition of useless offices and the reduction of extravagant establishments; and, to render it more difficult

in future to introduce abuses, the heads of offices were requested to lay before the Board a detail of such establishments as they conceived to be indispensably necessary for carrying on the business, specifying the duties and proposing the salaries for each individual; and it appears to us of particular importance for the perfection of the system to allow liberal salaries to the heads of responsible offices, and to abolish and prohibit in every case whatever all perquisites and emoluments, whether undefined or defined.

Important, however, as the object of economy must be admitted to be, I confess that I considered it as of a secondary nature to that of establishing useful arrangements for employing and facilitating the despatch of business at the public offices; and with that view some departments whose duties were of a similar nature, such as the Treasuries and the Accountant-General's offices, have been united, and the Civil servants, instead of being permitted to hold offices in different departments, have been restricted to one branch of the service.

The general plan having appeared to the Board of great consequence both for your interest and your satisfaction, we have thought it deserving of much attention and of a considerable portion of time in arranging its different parts. From the materials before you, it is open to your own judgment whether we have succeeded in the execution of our own intentions, which, I have already remarked, were to improve the mode of carrying on the public business of this Government in point of economy, order, and despatch, and to exhibit the nature of the duties and the precise amount of the incomes of all the Company's servants to the clear observation of your Honourable Court.

In the alteration of allowances, it has been a general rule that no fixed salary shall exceed the amount of the former salary and the usual perquisites and emoluments of the office put together, though in many instances it has been limited to an inferior sum; and the only new office that has been constituted is that of Civil Auditor, which became indispensably necessary to give effect to our Regulations by the

regular examination and check of all expenditures in the Civil departments, and I am persuaded that the salary which we have annexed to it will appear to you to be a very moderate compensation for the diligent and faithful discharge of so responsible a duty.

The augmentation of salaries which we have recommended for the members of the Board of Revenue will merit your attentive and favourable consideration. It is of the utmost importance for your service that revenue servants of experience and abilities should be induced by liberal allowances to become members of that Board; and a thorough knowledge of the internal state of the country, as well as uniformity of principle in directing the details of the collectors, is of so much real value for the comfort of the mass of the people and for the successful realisation of your land revenues, that it cannot fail to promote the public good to render the situation of the senior members (upon whose able conduct so much must depend) so advantageous that they may have no wish to be removed to any other office under the Government. . . .

Few circumstances have given me more sincere gratification than the voluntary public-spirited proposition of Sir William Jones to engage in the arduous undertaking of translating and forming a compilation of Hindu and Mussulman laws from the highest and most approved authorities of the respective religions, to be applied for the use and guidance of our native courts of justice.

The thorough knowledge which Sir William has acquired of the Eastern languages, joined to the extent of his literature and the strength of his natural abilities, constitute qualifications for executing the work that he has undertaken, which perhaps cannot in any other man be paralleled, and considering it singularly fortunate for this Government to be able to obtain the assistance of such a person, I could make no hesitation in granting from the public purse the moderate monthly sum that he required for defraying several articles of contingent expense, but particularly for allowing salaries to some learned eminent moulavies and

pundits during the time that he might have occasion to employ them in selecting and extracting the most salutary of their respective laws from the numerous volumes in which they are at present dispersed.

It is calculated by Sir William Jones that this work may be executed in two years, and if it can be accomplished according to the original plan it will justly render the name of its author dear to the natives of this country by enabling their European rulers to govern them according to their own ideas of humanity and justice. . . .

I have great satisfaction in congratulating your Honourable Court on the acquisition of the Guntoor<sup>1</sup> Circar to the Company. Former transactions respecting the Guntoor had persuaded me of the Nizam's<sup>2</sup> disinclination to relinquish that Circar, and I had therefore been induced, since my arrival in this country, by several considerations which related to public affairs of India as well as to those of Europe, to decline touching upon a subject which it was more than probable would be offensive to that Prince, and especially at a time when it would not have been prudent to have employed our power, if found necessary, to enforce our demand.

The friendly communication which we had established with several of the native powers had obviated part of my reasons for delay; but the accounts which I received of the settlement of the affairs of Holland, by removing all hazards

<sup>1</sup> Guntoor Circar: The word 'Circar' (Hind. 'Sircar,' from Pers. 'Sarkar,' head of affairs) was applied under the Mohammedan Government to certain extensive divisions of territory. The Northern Circars contained the following extensive divisions: Chicacole, Rajahmundry, Ellore, Condapitty, and Guntoor, which are now divided into the following districts: Ganjam, most north of Madras, Vizagapatam, Godavery, Kistna, and Guntoor. These provinces on the coast of Coromandel were assigned to Bussy (1753). They were ceded to Clive by a formal grant of the Moghul Emperor in trust; the Madras Government ignored the firman of the Emperor, and made a treaty with the Nizam of Hyderabad, by which they agreed to pay a yearly tribute of £70,000 for the Northern Circars. The Circar of Guntoor was not to be made over to the East India Company until after the death of Basalur Jang, the Nizam's eldest brother.

<sup>2</sup> Nizam: Nizam Ali usurped the throne of Hyderabad in 1761, and murdered his brother, Nizam Salabut Jang, in 1763.

of interference from any European Power, presented a singularly favourable opportunity for accomplishing our purpose, which I thought it my duty to embrace.

I therefore, without loss of time, dispatched Captain Kennaway, one of my aides-de-camp, in whose prudence and ability I could confide, to Hyderabad, with instructions to demand from the Nizam the full execution of the treaty which he made with the Company in the year 1768.

Captain Kennaway was also instructed to give the most solemn assurance that every stipulation on our part should be performed with the utmost punctuality and honour, and indeed I consider this to be as necessary for our real interests as it is indispensable for the credit of the national character. At the same time, however, though our right by treaty to the Circar was indisputable, and I was ready to adjust the public account with His Highness in the fairest and most liberal manner, I thought it proper, in addition to every conciliating argument that could be founded upon the faith of treaties and the general principles of justice, to take all other precautions that might be in my power to secure us against disappointment in obtaining our proposed object. On account of the Nizam's known disposition and talents for intrigue, it appeared to be a very necessary caution to avoid giving him time to consult with any of his neighbours upon means of opposition, by leaving him only a short interval after our demand to declare his decision, and by assembling a considerable body of troops in the neighbourhood under other pretexts, to be in readiness when necessary to give weight to our application, and to take possession of the Circar when surrendered. The able and judicious manner in which the measures were executed that depended upon Sir Archibald Campbell deserves my warmest acknowledgements, and I am happy to say that the means which we took have had the fortunate effect of inducing the Nizam, after very moderate signs of reluctance, to surrender the Circar to the Company's servants, who are now in possession of it.

The late revolution at Delhi and the barbarities exercised

there by Gholam Kadir Khan<sup>1</sup> and his Rohillas, and particularly in deposing and putting out the eyes of Shah Allum, have been shocking to the feelings of humanity; but as all parties have been equally careful to offer no injury or insult to this Government, or to our ally the Vizier, and as none of these transactions appeared to affect in any degree your political interests, it became our public duty to remain neutral spectators of scenes in which, from the dictates of private feelings, there would have been the strongest inducements to interfere.

I trust that it is unnecessary for me to be at much pains to assure you of my constant and earnest desire to avoid and discourage in every shape all kinds of superfluous expenditure of the public money. I am persuaded that your Honourable Court cannot be more averse than I am to put the Company to the heavy charge which attends the despatch of packets unless when requisite for evident purposes of public utility. Independent of the effect which your injunctions against the despatch of a packet might have had upon my determination, I should have been prevented last season from adopting that measure, by the uncertainty with which I must have spoken respecting the business of the Guntoor during the period in which it would have been proper that the packet should have sailed. I must, however, freely acknowledge that on account of the long interval between the despatch of the last ship of one season and that of the first of the following, added to the uncertainty and tediousness of despatches overland, it is my decided opinion, which I submit to your judgment, that hardly any one year can elapse in which the advantages that may

<sup>1</sup> In 1788 Gholam Kadir, a Rohilla chief ('that noble race,' says Macaulay), entered Delhi, took possession of the city and fortified palace, and made the Emperor, Shah Alam, a prisoner. "Shah Alam was sitting in the sun and complaining, when Gholam Kadir Khan said to some truculent Afghans, 'Throw this babbler down and blind him.' These men threw him down and passed the needle into his eyes. They kept him down safe on the ground with blows of sticks, and Gholam Kadir asked him derisively if he saw anything, and he replied, "Nothing but the Holy Kuran between me and you."—Ibrat Nama, "History of India as Told by its Own Historians," Elliott and Dowson.



arise to the Company's Government, both at home and abroad, from receiving mutual accounts from each other in or about the month of January of each year, will not render it an expedient measure to incur the expense of despatching a packet in the course of the month of August, both from Europe and from Bengal. . . .

I am persuaded that by a train of judicious measures the land revenue of those provinces is capable in time of being increased ; but, consistent with the principles of humanity and even of those of your own real interests, it is only by adopting means for the gradual cultivation and improvement of the waste lands, and by a gentle and cautious plan for the resumption of lands that have been fraudulently alienated, that it ought to be attempted to be accomplished. Men of speculative and sanguine dispositions, and others either from ignorance of the subject or with views of recommending themselves to your favour, may confidently hold forth specious grounds to encourage you in the hope that a great and immediate accession to that branch of your revenue might be practicable. My public duty obliges me to caution you in the most serious manner against listening to propositions which recommend this attempt, because I am clearly convinced that if carried into execution, they would be attended with the most baneful results.

Desperate adventurers, without fortune or character, would undoubtedly be found, as has already been too often experienced, to rent the different districts of the country at the highest rates that could be put upon them ; but the delusion would be of short duration, and the impolicy and inhumanity of the plan would perhaps, when too late for effectual remedy, become apparent by the complaints of the people and the disappointments at the Treasury in the payments of the revenue, and would probably terminate in the ruin and depopulation of the unfortunate country.

I am, etc.,

CORNWALLIS.

EARL CORNWALLIS TO JOHN WOODHOUSE,<sup>1</sup> ESQ.

CALCUTTA,

August 10, 1789.

SIR,

I have been favoured with your letters dated 17th July, 1788, and 10th March, 1789. I received the latter but two days ago; and although I am, just at the despatch of the *Swallow*, too much hurried to answer it fully by this conveyance, yet from your obliging expressions towards myself, and from the attention which I wish to pay to a person of your respectable character, and who has been so many years in the Direction, I cannot let the present opportunity pass without sending you a few lines in explanation of the transaction of which you complain.

I appointed Mr. — commercial Resident at —, from which station, after, I believe, about a year's trial, I was under the necessity of removing him, on account of his incapacity to manage the business of that aurung, and his repeated and obstinate disobedience of the orders of the Board of Trade. The whole detail of the circumstances of this transaction are on our Proceedings, which I will get abstracted for you, and transmit by one of the first ships of the season. Mr. —, although there was no imputation on his honour or integrity, was certainly let down very easily by being appointed Resident at —, and received more favour from this Government than his official conduct entitled him to.

His successor at — soon showed us what might be done by capacity and exertion, and in little more than a twelvemonth nearly restored that most valuable aurung, which had been ruined by long mismanagement, to its former flourishing condition.

In regard to Mr. —'s eventual succession to Beauliah or Malda, no opportunity has offered for its taking place since I have been in India; for when Mr. Grant was

<sup>1</sup> John Woodhouse, many years an East India Director.

removed from Malda it was necessary that his successor should take the unexpired term of his contract, before the end of which, Mr. — had been promoted to —, and given no favourable specimen of his abilities; but I fairly own to you that if a vacancy had happened, I should hardly have thought myself justified in appointing him to either of those Residencies, for he has had no experience in making silk, which important article forms a considerable part of the provision of the investment at both these places.

It is true that by the long existence of the contract system so few of the Company's servants had an opportunity of obtaining commercial knowledge that I have been under the necessity of appointing gentlemen to manage silk as well as other aurungs, who have had no experience, but then they appeared to me to be persons of quickness and exertion, which talents Mr. — unfortunately does not possess. Before I conclude I must beg leave to observe that I do not conceive any man can have behaved with more proper respect to the Court of Directors than I have done ever since I have held my present station; but I must freely acknowledge that before I accepted the arduous task of governing this country, I did understand that the practice of naming persons from England to succeed to offices of great trust and importance to the public welfare in this country, without either knowing or regarding whether such persons were in any degree qualified for such offices, was entirely done away. If unfortunately so pernicious a system should be again revived, I should feel myself obliged to request that some other person might immediately take from me the responsibility of governing these extensive dominions, that I might preserve my own character, and not be a witness to the ruin of the interests of my country.

I am, etc.,  
CORNWALLIS.

RIGHT HON. HENRY DUNDAS TO EARL CORNWALLIS.

*(Private.) Received March 4, 1790.*

WIMBLEDON,  
*August 1, 1789.*

MY DEAR LORD,

This letter is intended for your information on the subject of the China embassy. The difficulty of finding such a successor to Colonel Cathcart as was altogether satisfactory has occasioned a frequent change of resolutions on that subject. We had determined to commit the whole execution of this business to you, and with that view the accompanying papers were prepared, but against this resolution a legal doubt was stated by the Chancellor, importing that the King's authority could not be delegated to any other person; but that both the appointment of the person of the ambassador, and the instructions to be given to him, must flow from the King himself. In addition to this difficulty, another circumstance has recently come to my knowledge. I have discovered that the Court of Directors are rather hostile to the expedition, and give out that it may be highly prejudicial to their interests if, by creating jealousies among the Mandarins and other Chinese at Canton, it should suspend in any degree the intercourse with them, by which only, under the present circumstances, their trade can be carried on. I feel so much the importance of establishing a commercial connexion with the great empire of China, that I am not disposed to be discouraged from the plan by any trivial obstructions; but considering the near approach of the period when a total new arrangement with the East India Company must take place, and considering how much the prosperity of their affairs depends on the resources of the China trade, it occurred to me as imprudent to give them a handle for saying that any measure suggested or promoted by Government had proved prejudicial to them. I stated the difficulty to Mr. Pitt and Mr. Grenville, and they concur in opinion with me. We

are all, however, desirous that as much forwardness as possible should take place in the business, either with a view to final completion, or further information. For this purpose I trouble you with this letter. From the instructions to Colonel Cathcart formerly sent to you, and the papers herewith sent, you are in the full possession of all our ideas; and if no material objection occur to you against it, we would suggest to you the propriety of selecting some person from among those in India, in whose discretion and abilities you can confide, and employing him to make his way to China, either as a secret agent and without any avowed authority, or as commissioned by you to settle such points as fall within the sphere of your Government. By means of such a person, sent in whichever of these modes you may judge most prudent, we conceive you may receive information as to such particulars of the Chinese Government, dispositions and commercial wants, as may enable you and us to judge how far we are justified in the notion we entertain of the importance of a more extended commercial connexion with China, and how far there is a reasonable prospect of our being able to accomplish it.

I have, etc.,

HENRY DUNDAS.

EARL CORNWALLIS TO LORD HOOD.

CALCUTTA,

*December 4, 1789.*

MY LORD,

I have been honoured with your Lordship's letter dated the 31st of January, and I can assure you that it would at all times give me pleasure to have it in my power to manifest my personal esteem for you, and that I should be disposed to think favourably of those persons for whom you profess yourself to be interested.

The anxious concern, however, that you will easily believe I take in the future welfare and prosperity of this country led me long since to consider of what infinite

importance it would be that the seat at the Supreme Board should be properly filled; and for that purpose I named some men of whose abilities and integrity I had seen the clearest proofs, and strongly urged the Government at home to endeavour to procure their nomination.

So far, therefore, from being at liberty to assist Mr. — on the present occasion, your Lordship must be sensible that I am under the necessity of being his opponent; but I cannot help adding that if I was totally disengaged, and however favourably I might in other respects be disposed to think of Mr. —'s character, and to feel for his misfortunes, I could never bring myself to assist any man in obtaining a seat in the Supreme Council of Bengal who had dissipated his fortune at the gaming table.

I am, etc.,

CORNWALLIS.

EARL CORNWALLIS TO THE RIGHT HON. HENRY DUNDAS.

*(Private and Confidential.)*

April 4, 1790.

DEAR SIR,

In my other *private and confidential* letter I have contented myself with giving the most precise and minute answers in my power to some of the queries that you stated in your letter addressed to me, as well as to the Governors of Madras and Bombay. But as I am very sincerely anxious for the reputation and permanency of the present administration, and shall ever feel most warmly concerned for our national prosperity in the country, I should not act a friendly part by you, or properly in other respects, if I omitted on this occasion to give you my sentiments most freely on some of the principles that may come under discussion when you proceed to frame a plan for the government of our Indian possessions after the expiration of the Company's present charter.

I must acknowledge that I was happy to hear that the principles of that plan were still under deliberation, and

that it was only upon the supposition that the commercial branch might be left to the Company, and the other departments taken into the hands of Government, that you had stated those queries. Many weighty objections occur to the separation that you propose, for it is almost beyond a doubt with me that no solid advantages would be derived from placing the civil and revenue departments under the immediate direction of the King's Government; and I am perfectly convinced that if the fostering aid and protection, and, what is full as important, the check and control of the Governments abroad, are withdrawn from the commercial department, the Company would not long enjoy their new charter, but must very soon be reduced to a state of actual bankruptcy.

I am not surprised that after the interested and vexatious contradictions which you have experienced from the Court of Directors, you should be desirous of taking as much of the business as possible entirely out of their hands; but I know that great changes are hazardous in all popular Governments, and as the paltry patronage of sending out a few writers is of no value to such an administration as Mr. Pitt's, I should recommend it to your serious consideration whether it would not be wiser, when you shall no longer have to contend with chartered rights, to tie their hands from doing material mischief, without meddling with their imperial dignity or their power of naming writers, and not to encounter the furious clamour that will be raised against annexing the patronage of India to the influence of the Crown except in cases of the most absolute necessity.

That a Court of Directors formed of such materials as the present can never, when left to themselves, conduct any branch of the business of this country properly I will readily admit; but under certain restrictions, and when better constituted, it might prove an useful check on the ambitious or corrupt designs of some future Minister. In order, however, to enable such Directors to do this negative good, or to prevent their doing much positive evil, they should have a circumscribed management of the whole, and not a

permission to ruin, uncontrolled, the commercial advantages which Britain should derive from her Asiatic territories.

It will, of course, have been represented to you that the India Company formerly was supported by its commerce alone, and that it was then richer than it is at present, and that when their Directors have no longer any business with governing empires, they may again become as thrifty merchants as heretofore. I am persuaded, however, that experience would give a contradiction to that theory, for if they should not have lost their commercial talents by having been Emperors, this country is totally changed by being under their dominion. There are now so many Europeans residing in India, and there is such a competition at every aurung of any consequence, that in my opinion even an upright Board of Trade sitting at Calcutta could not make advantageous contracts, or prevent the manufacturers from being debased; and therefore that unless the Company have able and active Residents at the different factories, and unless those Residents are prevented by the power of Government from cheating them as they formerly did, London would no longer be the principal mart for the choicest commodities of India.

If the proposed separation was to take place, not a man of credit or character would stay in the Company's service if he could avoid it, and those who did remain, or others who might be hereafter appointed, would be soon looked upon as an inferior class of people to the servants acting under appointments from His Majesty.

The contempt with which they would be treated would not pass unobserved by the natives, and would preclude the possibility of their being of essential use, even if they were not deficient in character or commercial abilities, and upon the supposition that the Company could afford to pay them liberally for their services.

When you add to the evils which I have described, and which no man acquainted with this country will think fictitious, the jobbing that must prevail at the India House in a department which is in a manner given up to plunder,



you will not, I am sure, think that I have gone too far in prophesying the bankruptcy of the Company.

In answer to this statement of the impossibility of the Company's carrying on the trade when all the other parts of the administration of the country are taken into the hands of Government, it may be said by people who have reflected but little on the subject: 'If the Company cannot carry on the trade, throw it open to all adventurers.' To that mode I should have still greater objections, as it would render it very difficult for Government to prevent this unfortunate country from being overrun by desperate speculators from all parts of the British dominions. The manufacturers would soon go to ruin, and the exports, which would annually diminish in value, would be sent indiscriminately to the different countries of Europe.

Although I can see no kind of objection to your opening the export trade from Britain to this country as much as you please, I cannot bring myself to believe that any person well acquainted with the manners of the natives and with the internal state of this country, would seriously propose to throw the export trade from India entirely open, because it must necessarily come previously under consideration whether the surplus revenue could be remitted by bills of exchange, and whether a more efficacious mode can be devised for securing the greatest possible advantages from the country to the British Government and to the nation at large than by transmitting yearly a valuable investment of the best goods that Hindostan can afford, which will not only furnish a large sum in duties to the State, but bring foreign purchasers from all quarters to the London market. We have made our investments these last two years under every possible local disadvantage—viz., the exorbitant price of grain and cotton, the total failure of the silk, and the dreadful famine and inundations in the Dacca district; yet if you could get Mr. Scott<sup>1</sup> the Director, or some other

<sup>1</sup> David Scott, died October 4, 1805. M.P. for Forfar County from November, 1790; then for Forfar Boroughs till his death. An East India Director for many years, and Chairman in 1796 and 1801.

person who would make a fair report, to inquire into the merits of these investments, I have no doubt of its appearing that the Company have not for many years received an investment of so good quality, or one that would have been likely to have afforded so large a profit, if, besides all other disadvantages, the India sales in London had not been considerably injured by the troubles in France and by the war in other parts of Europe, as well as by the powerful competition of the British manufactures.

I know that it is much easier to point out defects in any plan that may be proposed than to substitute another good one in its place, and you will be sufficiently aware that the Opposition in Parliament will spare no pains or exertions to throw ridicule and odium upon any system that you or Mr. Pitt may bring forward, without thinking it incumbent upon them to propose any remedies for the errors or imperfections which they will lay to its charge.

As a multiplicity of affairs continually press themselves upon me for immediate despatch, I am not able to give up much of my time to reflect deliberately upon this extensive subject, and as there are but few people here of comprehensive views and abilities with whom I can examine and fully discuss the various objects which ought to be included in so important a plan, I do not feel perfectly confident that I should, after more mature reflection, be entirely satisfied with all the opinions upon it which I at present entertain; but I have thought it right to state without ceremony the ideas that I have at present formed for yours and Mr. Pitt's consideration.

As the new system will only take place when the rights of the present Company cease, you cannot be charged with a violation of charters, and the attacks of the Opposition in Parliament will therefore be confined to an examination of its expediency and efficacy. I fancy I need hardly repeat to you that they would above all things avail themselves of any apparent attempt on your part to give an increase of patronage to the Crown which could not be justified on the soundest constitutional principles or on the ground of

evident necessity, and would make use of it to misrepresent your intentions and principles, and to endeavour to inflame the minds of the nation against you.

An addition of patronage to the Crown to a certain degree will, however, in my opinion, be not only a justifiable measure, but absolutely necessary for the future good government of this country. But according to my judgment, a renewal of the Company's charter for the management of the territorial revenues and the commerce of India for a limited time (for instance ten or fifteen years), and under such stipulations as it may be thought proper to annex as conditions, would be the wisest foundation for your plan, both for your own sakes as Ministers, and as being best calculated for securing the greatest possible advantages to Britain from her Indian possessions, and least likely to injure the essential principles of our own Constitution.

The present Court of Directors is so numerous, and the responsibility for public conduct which falls to the share of each individual is so small, that it can have no great weight with any of them, and the participation in a profitable contract, or the means of serving friends or providing for relations, must always more than compensate to them for the loss that they may sustain by any fluctuation that may happen in the market-price of the stock which constitutes their qualifications. I should therefore think that it would be very useful to the public to reduce the number of Directors to twelve, or to nine; and if handsome salaries could be annexed to those situations, I should be clear for adopting means for their being prohibited from having an interest directly or indirectly in contracts, or in any commercial transactions whatever in which the Company may have the smallest concern.

At the same time, however, if one or both of these points should be carried, I would not by any means recommend that they should retain the power of appointing Governors, Commanders-in-Chief, or Members of Council at any of the Presidencies; the honour and interest of the nation, the fate of our fleets and armies, being too deeply staked

on the conduct of the persons holding the above-mentioned offices, to render it safe to trust their nominations in any other hands but those of the executive Government of Britain. But as this measure, though not in fact deviating very widely from the existing arrangement by which the King has the power of recalling those officers, would at first appear a strong one, and would be vehemently opposed, I would give it every qualification that the welfare and security of the country could admit of. I would establish it by law that the choice of the Civil Members of Council should be limited to Company's servants of a certain standing (at least twelve years), which would in the mind of every candid person leave very little room in respect to them for ministerial patronage, and it should be left to the Court of Directors to frame such general regulations for the appointment to offices in India as should be consistent with the selection of capable men, and to establish the strictest system that they can devise of check and control upon every article of expenditure at the different Presidencies.

I would likewise recommend that it should be clearly understood and declared that the Court of Directors should have a right to expect that His Majesty's Ministers would pay the greatest attention to all their representations respecting the conduct of the Governors, Commanders-in-Chief, and Councillors; and that in case satisfactory redress should not be given to any of their complaints of that nature, that they should have a right to insist upon a recall of any Governor, Commander-in-Chief, or Councillor whom they should name, and that the utmost facility should be given to them to institute prosecutions against such Governors, etc., whose conduct may appear to them to have been culpable, before the Court of Judicature which has been established by Act of Parliament for the trial of Indian delinquents.

In regard to the Military arrangement, I am clearly of opinion that the European troops should all belong to the King, for experience has shown that the Company cannot keep up an efficient European force in India; this is a fact

so notorious, that no military man who has been in this country will venture to deny it, and I do not care how strongly I am quoted as authority for it.

The circumstances, however, of the native troops are very different. It is highly expedient, and indeed absolutely necessary for the public good, that the officers who are destined to serve in those corps should come out at an early period of life and devote themselves entirely to the Indian Service; a perfect knowledge of the language, and a minute attention to the customs and religious prejudices of the sepoys being qualifications for that line which cannot be dispensed with. Were these officers to make a part of the King's army, it would soon become a practice to exchange their commissions with ruined officers from England, who would be held in contempt by their inferior officers, and in abhorrence by their soldiers, and you need not be told how dangerous a disaffection in our native troops would be to our existence in this country. I think, therefore, that as you cannot make laws to bind the King's prerogative in the exchanges or promotions of his army, it would be much the safest determination to continue the native troops in the Company's service, and by doing so you would still leave to the Court of Directors the patronage of cadets, and of course give some popularity to the measure.

The ultimate line to be drawn would give to the Court of Directors the appointment of writers to the Civil branches of the service, and of cadets for the native troops, and the power of prescribing certain general rules under the descriptions I have mentioned, for the disposal of offices by the Governments in India, and of calling the Governors, etc., to an immediate account for every deviation from these rules; but they ought to be strictly prohibited from appointing or recommending any of their servants to succeed to offices in this country, as such appointments or recommendations are more frequently granted to intrigue and solicitation than to a due regard to real merit or good pretensions, and such interference at home must always tend in some degree to weaken the authority of the Government in India.

The mode of choosing the Directors, the term of their continuance in office, and the manner in which they should render an account of their own conduct, and lay statements of the affairs of the Company before the Proprietors of the Stock, with a variety of other points of that nature, will be subjects of regulation upon the present occasion; but upon the supposition of the charters being renewed, it appears to me highly requisite for the public good that the right of inspection and control in the King's Ministers should be extended to every branch of the Company's affairs, without any exception as to their commerce; and as altercations between the controuling power and the Court of Directors must always be detrimental to the public interest, whether occasioned by improper encroachments on one side, or an obstinate or capricious resistance on the other, it seems particularly desirable that not only the extent, but also the manner in which the Ministers are to exercise the right of inspection and controul, should be prescribed so clearly as to prevent, if possible, all grounds for misapprehension or dispute.

I am, etc.,  
CORNWALLIS.

THE SECRET COMMITTEE TO EARL CORNWALLIS.

*(Received March 16, 1792.)*

EAST INDIA HOUSE,  
*September 21, 1791.*

MY LORD,

. . . The brilliant successes which by our last accounts have attended your Lordship's operations, give us great room to hope that an honourable and advantageous peace may have been concluded before this despatch can reach India. At all events, from the variety of circumstances of which it is impossible for us to be sufficiently informed beforehand, we do not feel it in our power to give any precise instructions for your Lordship's guidance with respect to the terms on which it may be proper to insist :

we have the fullest confidence in your Lordship's discretion in the completion of this important work, and we know that you are impressed as deeply as ourselves with a sense how essential it is to the finances and interests of the Company that the war should be brought to a speedy termination. We have, therefore, only to state, in conformity to this idea, that although in the event of as successful an issue of the war as we have ground to expect, we certainly feel ourselves entitled to look to such advantageous conditions as may in some measure indemnify us for our expense, and give additional security in future—we are nevertheless particularly desirous that we should rather forego even some portion of the advantages which we might justly expect, than risk the continuance of the war. The great object, therefore, to which we wish your Lordship's attention to be directed, and which we are persuaded you will have uniformly in view, is that of embracing the first possible opportunity of concluding the war on reasonable and honourable terms for ourselves and our Allies.

We are, etc.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO LIEUT.-COLONEL ROSS FROM  
BENGAL.

(Dated May 27, 1792.)

[*Enclosed in the succeeding letter.*]

I am very sensible how great a private sacrifice his Lordship has made by determining to continue in this country until the arrival of a successor from England, but as far as the public good is concerned it has afforded me the sincerest joy. It will insure to this country a long continuance of external tranquillity and internal prosperity. By remaining some time longer he will not only be able to give strength and durability to the happy political security in which we now seem to be placed, but also to insure the internal prosperity of the British possessions by completing his various arrangements both in Bengal

and at the other Presidencies. These grand objects certainly could not have been so fully accomplished had his Lordship resolved to depart for Europe shortly after his return to Bengal, even supposing a successor to have arrived. As for leaving the Government in interim hands, it appears to me that it would have been attended with the most ruinous consequences. Matters have gone on quietly and conformably to the established regulations during the time he has been upon the coast, because, as it was known he would return, his influence has operated as powerfully as if he had been present upon the spot; but there are numerous animosities and jealousies subsisting, which would burst forth immediately were that restraining influence to be entirely withdrawn, and no other sufficiently powerful to be substituted in its place. Such is human nature that it does not readily brook the authority of persons suddenly raised from the level of their equals and invested with the reins of power, especially if in the management of them they are influenced by passion and caprice. In such cases, individuals are too often apt to sacrifice the public interest without remorse to gratify private resentment, and by that means give rise to the most serious disorders. The Company's servants are certainly the most fit persons for Members of Council, but from what I have seen since his Lordship's departure, I am convinced that it could never answer to appoint any of them to the Government. Such is the present temper of the British part of the community in India, that it appears to me that nobody but a person who has never been in the service, and who is entirely unconnected with the individuals who compose it, who is of a rank far surpassing his associates in the Government, and has the full support of the Ministry at home, can be competent to govern our possessions with that energy and vigour which is essential to our political safety and internal prosperity.



EARL CORNWALLIS TO THE RIGHT HON. HENRY DUNDAS.

(*Private.*)

MADRAS,

June 18, 1792.

DEAR SIR,

I have now been about three weeks at this Presidency, and happy should I be to tell you that the situation of this great and important Government was much to my satisfaction ; but I must confess that I do not observe any material improvement that has been made, and that I see no flattering prospect.

Sir Charles Oakeley, though not a very capable man, is, I believe, the best of all the Civil servants of this establishment that could have been selected to fill the station of Governor, and yet you may be assured that he never will possess sufficient authority or make any radical reform.

It is very difficult for a man to divest himself of the prejudices which the habits of twenty years have confirmed, and to govern people who have lived with him so long on a footing of equality. But the Company's servants have still greater obstacles to encounter when they become Governors, for the wretched policy of the Company has, till the late alterations took place in Bengal, invariably driven all their servants to the alternative of starving or of taking what was not their own ; and although some have been infinitely less guilty in this respect than others, the world will not tamely submit to be reformed by those who have practised it in the smallest degree.

It is not the intention of this letter to enter into the defects of the system that prevails from Ganjam to Cape Comorin, but I shall only repeat what I have so often said, as being the most important point of all, that unless you can find good Governors no system whatever can succeed. A man of upright intentions, with ability and application, that would undertake this Government for six or seven years, might do great things for the public and save a

considerable fortune for himself. If you cannot tempt such a man with these prospects, I have no effectual remedy to propose.

What I have said about Governors is equally applicable to Bombay, and still more to the Supreme Government, which I hope never again to see in the hands of a Company's servant.

I enclose an extract of a letter which Ross received lately from one of the most able and most honourable men in Bengal, who never was spoken to upon the subject, but who was led to turn his thoughts to it from the observations he had made on the conduct of the Council during my absence. As his opinion coincides perfectly with my own, and as he cannot have a private interest in circumscribing the limits of promotion for the Company's servants, it must give additional weight to what I have said.

I have purposely confined myself in this letter to the subject of Governors, and have given you opinions that you will perceive are pretty free, and consequently intended to be perfectly confidential between us; I mean always including Mr. Pitt. . . .

I am, etc.,  
CORNWALLIS.

MARQUIS CORNWALLIS TO THE HON. MAJOR-GENERAL  
SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY, K.B.

ON THE RIVER,  
NEAR AUGAURDEEP,  
*August 16, 1805.*

MY DEAR SIR,

Lord Wellesley has communicated to me some remarks which he says were written by you on a paper entitled 'Observations on the Treaty of Bassien,' in which remarks the following circumstances are stated:—

'Lord Cornwallis, who foresaw the difficulties and dangers to which the alliance would be exposed from the claims of the Mahrattas upon the Nizam, endeavoured to

establish the alliance upon a more firm basis, by interposing the arbitration of the British Government in this dispute. But the Mahrattas, who knew that their claims were without foundation, that they depended entirely upon their superior strength, and that the result of an arbitration by the British Government must be unfavourable to them, declined to accept the offer made by Lord Cornwallis.

‘I conceive this to be the real history of the refusal of Lord Cornwallis to allow the Mahrattas to subsidise two British battalions, as mentioned by the anonymous observer, if such a proposal was ever made to him.’

I am persuaded that, both as to the fact which is there mentioned of a proposition made by me to the Mahrattas, as well as in respect to the inference you have drawn from it, of my motives for refusing to give a British subsidiary force to that Power, you must have conceived that you had obtained the most correct information. I am, however, entirely at a loss to guess from whence you could have derived it, as I assure you that no proposition of any interference in the disputes between the Mahrattas and the Nizam was ever made by me, and that it was the invariable principle of my Government to avoid involving the British power in the consequences of any internal disputes that might exist either amongst the Mahrattas themselves, or between them and the Nizam.

Hurry Punt, a few days before the separation of the armies on their return from Seringapatam, said to me: ‘No States can be on more friendly terms than that of the Peshwa and the British Government. Now we are going to separate, let me ask you why you will not give a subsidiary force to the Peshwa, as you have to the Nizam?’ I replied that I disapproved very much of all subsidiary treaties, as they tended to involve the British Government in quarrels in which they had no concern; that the treaty with the Nizam was made many years before I came to India, and it was not in my power to release myself from it, but that I was determined not to enter into any more

engagements of that kind; that if it were otherwise, there was no person with whom I would more readily form such a connexion than the Peshwa.

This, of course, is not given as a literal statement of what passed as long as thirteen years ago, in a conversation of which I have no notes, but in the substance of it I am sure I am very correct; and it cannot fail to convince you that you have been misled in the information upon which that part of your remarks was founded.

I was very sorry to find that you had left the country before my arrival. Sincerely hoping that you enjoy your health perfectly in England,

I am, etc.,  
CORNWALLIS.

MARQUIS CORNWALLIS TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD LAKE.

NEAR CARAGOLA,  
*August 30, 1805.*

MY DEAR LORD,

I received yesterday with great satisfaction your very kind letter of the 11th instant, and have no doubt that we shall act together with as perfect harmony as we ever have done on former occasions.

You will easily imagine it was no slight cause that urged the Ministers at home to press me to return once more to this country, and that I would not, without seeing very great necessity, have engaged at my time of life in so difficult and, I may say, so rash an undertaking.

The real circumstances are that it is not the opinion only of Ministers, or of a party, but of all reflecting men of every description, that it is physically impracticable for Great Britain, in addition to all other embarrassments, to maintain so vast and so unwieldy an Empire in India; which annually calls for reinforcements of men and for remittances of money, and which yields little other profit except brilliant Gazettes. It is in vain for us to conceal from ourselves that our finances are at the lowest ebb, and

that we literally have not the means of carrying on the ordinary business of government.

If necessity should require it, the armies that are prepared must, at all hazards, be put in action; but I certainly would postpone that measure until the last extremity, as I sincerely believe that if all other necessary payments of government were suspended, it would scarcely be possible for us to provide for their support.

With regard to any movement of your own, I certainly do not wish that you should submit to any measure of insult or aggression, but I very much deprecate its taking place. The situation of Scindia and Holkar are in a very considerable degree different, and perhaps it would not be necessary to observe exactly the same conduct towards both of them. I cannot easily define, in the multiplicity of cessions and conquests, what may be considered actually, or what may be regarded virtually, as our territory; but wherever our own Government has been regularly established, I would promptly resist an invasion by either of them.

From the reports I have received from our Residents, I am sorry to find that the States who are most intimately connected with us, such as the Peshwa and the Nizam, are reduced to the most forlorn condition; that these Powers possess no funds or troops on whom they can depend; that anarchy and disaffection prevail universally throughout their dominions; and that unless the British Residents exercised a power and an ascendancy that they ought not to exert, those Governments would be immediately dissolved.

The Rajah of Berar, and other chiefs who have suffered great deprivations, can certainly entertain no friendly disposition towards us, and unless a very great change can be effected in the minds of the natives of India, and in the ideas they must now harbour of our views, I confess that, under all these impressions, I cannot look forward with any sanguine hope to the establishment, by any means in our power, of that happy and permanent peace, which is so much to be desired, and of which you see so fair a prospect.

I have been indisposed for some time, and the complaint has now fallen into my feet, which puts me to great pain; I cannot, therefore, at present, without considerable inconvenience, make more use of my own pen than by signing my name to any letters I have occasion to write.

I am, etc.,

CORNWALLIS.

## INDEX

- ABERCROMBY, General:** commands troops in campaign against Tippoo, 29-31; returns to Malabar Coast, 31-34; in new campaign, 47, 48, 55; before Seringapatam, 56, 61, 62, 64; to restore order in Malabar, 67, 68
- Abwab explained,** 95, 96
- Alam.** *See* Shah
- Ali.** *See* Nizam
- Ali Behaudur,** 145
- Ali Riza, Nabob:** commands Tippoo's troops near Samoga, 49; his vakeel, 58
- Altumgha (althamga):** royal grant in perpetuity, 80
- Amboor,** 36
- Appa Saheb,** 34
- Arcot, Nabob of,** 6, 143
- Army reform,** 147-165
- Arrakerry (Arikera),** village near Seringapatam, 23, 24; battle of, 25-29
- Aumeen (ameen)** explained, 104, n. 1
- Aumildars (amal-dars),** officers' loans to, 161
- Aumils (amils),** 79
- Azeem ul Omrah, Nizam's Minister,** 39, 46-48, 57, 59, 60, 63, 68
- Baillie of Dunain, Colonel,** killed in action, 169
- Baird, Sir David, Lieutenant-Colonel,** 42, 51
- Banda in Bundelkund, Nabob of,** 145 n.
- Bangalore stormed,** 19, 20, 21, 29, 32, 33, 35, 40
- Barramaul (Baramahal) district,** 36, 65, 66
- Bassien (Bassein),** Treaty of, 197
- Beauliah (Baulia),** 181
- Bednore, province and town,** 46, 49
- Bega(h) explained,** 95, 96
- Behar (Bahar),** district of: collections, 104, 107, 116; land revenue settlement, 78, 79, 86, 100, 137; notified, 87; manufactures to be protected by import duties, 174; opium contract, 140; waste land in, 97
- Benares (city),** 128 n., 136, 146, 174; Resident, 171, 173, 174
- Benares district,** 171; decay of, 173; reformed management, 173; imports from, subject to duties, 174; opium contract, 140; revenues reduced, 99, 100
- Benares, Rajah of,** 99, 173
- Beneram (Beny Ram) Fundit, Berar Minister,** 128
- Bengal:** administration reform, 17, 196; agriculture principal source of its wealth, 112; allowances to troops in stations, 149; European infantry, 155; internal traffic and duties, 109, 116; land revenue settlement, 78, 79, 93, 100, 102, 105, 106, 137; to be notified, 87, 115; manufactures to be protected by import duties, 174; native troops, 149, 153, 154, 156; officers' deplorable condition, 157; sepoy officers in, 162; opium contract, 140; ryots' privileges in, 96; Supreme Council of, 185; waste lands in, 97, 117
- Berar, Rajah of.** *See* Moodajee, Raghuji
- Bhonsla.** *See* Moodajee, Raghuji
- Boccamootah district,** 101
- Bombay Presidency:** Government co-operates against Tippoo, 6-8, 55, 67; troops: to be offered to Marathas, 127; co-operate with Marathas, 6, 47, 48, 153, 154; allowances to them, 149; European infantry, 155; marine battalion, 156; native infantry, 156
- Bundelkund,** 145 n.
- Burdwan district, collections,** 167
- Burdwan, Rajah of,** 114
- Burke, Edmund,** 83
- Burke, William, Paymaster-General,** 82, 84
- Bussy, M. de,** 177, n. 1
- Calcutta:** committee of revenue, 104; Court of Appeal, 125, 126; Supreme Court of Judicature, 125; town duties, 80, 82, 101, 131, 174, 181, 184
- Calicut, district and Rajah of,** 3, 4
- Campbell, Sir Archibald, Commander-in-Chief at Madras,** 130, 178
- Cankanelly, village in Mysore,** 22

- Cannanore surrenders, 18  
 Canonoe explained, 100 n.; fallacious estimates in Midnapore, 101  
 Canton, 183; treasury at, to be assisted by East India, 114  
 Carnatic: basis of operations against Tippoo, 7, 16, 19, 21, 35, 130, 132; effectually protected by peace treaty, 61, 65-67; rains, 16  
 Caveri (Cauvery) River, 20, 22, 24, 26, 47, 56, 64, 66  
 Caveriporam Pass, 66  
 Cawnpore, 128  
 Cenapatam, 25  
 Ceylon, Dutch Governor of, requested to watch French movements, 11  
 Chalmers (Sir John), Lieutenant: defends Coimbatore, taken prisoner, 57, 58  
 Chicacole district, 177, n. 1  
 China embassy, Cornwallis informed about, 183, 184. *See* Canton  
 Chintomenypet, 46  
 Chitteldroog (Chitaldroog): nature of country, 69; town, 35  
 Choky explained, 109, n. 2; 110  
 Chowdry explained, 98, n. 2  
 Clive, Robert, Lord: Guntoor Circar ceded to, 177, n. 1; Fund, 149  
 Cochin: district, 3, 4, 11; Governor, 4; Rajah, tributary to Tippoo, 3, 4  
 Cockerell, Lieutenant-Colonel, 41, 42, 51  
 Coimbatore: operations against Tippoo in, 14, 15, 37; left to Tippoo, 66; (town), capitulation of, 57, 58  
 Colebrooke, Mr., desirous of appointment in India, 80  
 Coleroon (arm of Caveri River), 67  
 Committee of Circuit, 99, 104  
 Condapitty, 177, n. 1  
 Constantinople, Tippoo's embassy to, 58  
 Coorga (Coorg), 63, 69  
 Cootingherry, Rajah of, 3, 4  
 Cornwallis (Charles), Earl, later Marquis, Governor-General: his terms for accepting office, 81, 182; induces Nizam to surrender Guntoor, 178; China embassy, 183, 184; intention to resign, 2; remains in India, 2, 7, 13; decides to assume personal charge of Madras Presidency, 1, 7, 8; abandons the idea, 9; prepares campaign against Tippoo, 1-12; proceeds to Madras, 17; takes Bangalore, 19; first march on Seringapatam, 19-24; battle of Arikera, 25-29; abandons plan of campaign, retires to Bangalore, 31-33; is joined by Maratha armies, 34; secures access to Carnatic, 36; prep treaty, campaign, 38, 39; declines mt, 67, negotiations with Tippoo, his operations delayed by Colonel, movements and defeat of troops, 46; second adv<sup>ce</sup> Seringapatam, 49; recd Poona: Tippoo's position, 50; his pl<sup>an</sup> 27, attack, 41-43, 50-52; comma<sup>nd</sup> centre division, 41-43, 51; defeat Tippoo's army, 44, 52-54; joined by Abercromby, 55; preparations for siege of Seringapatam, 56, 64; negotiations with Tippoo (preliminaries signed), 57-59, 63; declines share in prize-money, 62; withdraws from Seringapatam, 64; letter from Secret Committee urging speedy conclusion of the war, 193, 194; his views on treaty, 60, 61, 65; returns to England (1794), 147; his reasons for returning to India (1805), 199; a high praise of his character and administration in a letter from Bengal, 194  
 Coromandel coast, 149, 177, n. 1.  
 Court: of Judicature (for the trial of Indian delinquents), 191; General, Martial, proposed, 161; of Sudder Dewanny Adawlut, 126; Superior Criminal (Nizamut Adawlut), 126; Supreme, of Judicature, 125, 140  
 Courts: of Appeal, 125, 126; of Circuit, 125, 126; City, 125; District (Zillah), 124, 125; native, 141, 142, 176; Revenue (Maal Adawlut), abolished, 124  
 Cranganore, Dutch fort, purchased by Rajah of Travancore, 2-4  
 Cuttack, free passage through, for E.I.C.'s troops, 129  
 Dacca, Court of Appeal, 125  
 Dacca Province: reports of collector, 97; famine and inundation in, 188  
 Darwar, fort, surrenders, 20, 21, 35  
 (Daulat Rao) Sindia, invasion by him feared, 200  
 Deccan, commerce with the, 173; merchants come to Mirzapore, 136.  
*See* Nizam  
 Delhi, revolution in, 178  
 Dewanny Adawlut, 124  
 Dindigul, fortress, taken by General Medows, 15, 66, 67  
 District Courts, 124, 125  
 Doab, 170  
 Dowlat Baug, the (royal garden in Seringapatam), 51  
 Dowse, Lieutenant, 41  
 Duncan (Jonathan), 136. *See* Benares



Duff, Colonel, 25, 51  
 Dundas, Right Hon. Henry (President of Board of Control) : Cornwallis's letter to him, 147, 171, 185, 196 ; his letter to Cornwallis, 183  
 Durwar. *See* Darwar  
 Dutch forts sold to Rajah of Travancore, 2-4. *See* Ceylon  
 Ed-gah (Ar.-P. 'Idgäh), fortified place of worship near Seringapatam, 50, 51 ; carried after heavy fighting, 53  
 Ellore district, 177, n. 1  
 Eratore ford, 47  
 Floyd, (Sir) John, (Lieutenant-)Colonel, in command of cavalry detachment of General Medows' army, defeated by Tippoo, 15, 19, 29  
 Forster, George, sent to Berar Government with Cornwallis's instructions, 128  
 Fort St. George, Government of : attitude towards Tippoo disapproved of, 1, 3, 5, 6, 13 ; Cornwallis decides to take charge of Presidency, 7, 8 ; General Medows appointed Governor, 8, 9. *See* Madras  
 Fort William, 10, 12, 69, 116, 135, 143. *See* Calcutta  
 Foujedarry department (police jurisdiction, criminal), 142  
 France : embassy sent to, by Tippoo, 14 ; hostilities between England and, expected, 131, 132 ; possible disputes in India, 168 ; possibly allied with Tippoo, 11, 14, 127, 132, 171 ; troubles in, affect Indian sales in London, 189  
 Fraser, Major, 42  
 French islands, native children sold to, 140  
 "French rocks," near Seringapatam, 49  
 French ships, right to search, 168  
 Furruckabad, 170  
 Futyghur brigade recalled, 169  
 Ganjam district, 177, n. 1  
 Ghauts, 61, 64 ; (Western :) passed by Abercromby, 32, 34, 47, 48, 65, 68 ; (Eastern :) 65, 66  
 Gholam Ali Khan, Tippoo's vakeel, 58  
 Gholam Kadir Khan, Rohilla leader, 179  
 Godavery district, 177, n. 1  
 Gopaul, fortress, surrenders, 20, 21  
 Grant, Mr., Resident at Malda, 181  
 Gunge explained, 109, n. 1

Gunges, 79, 115 ; unauthorised, 109 ; to be placed in the hands of Government, 116, 138  
 Guntoor Circar surrendered by Nizam, 177-179  
 Gurramconda, fort, 46  
 Guzzlehutti Pass, 66  
 Harris, Lieutenant-Colonel, 27  
 Hartley, Colonel, 18  
 Hastings (W.), 128 n.  
 Hauts (markets held on certain days) duties, 109, 116  
 Hindoo Law. *See* Law  
 Hindostan : Company's credit suffered in, 170 ; likely to improve, 174 ; E.I.C.'s territory in, described, 74 ; export of goods, 188 ; laws and customs, 142 ; Maratha interests in, 146 ; Sindia in, 144, 145 n., 146  
 Holkar. *See* Jaswant and Tuccojee  
 Hood, Lord, 184  
 Hooghly River, 117  
 Hooliadroog (hill fort), 49  
 Hurry Punt : in command of Maratha army, 34, 35, 48 ; authorised to negotiate with Tippoo, 40 ; his part in negotiations, 57, 59, 63 ; asks for British subsidiary force, 198 ; returns to his country, 68  
 Hustabood explained, 95, n. 1 ; 104, n. 2  
 Hyder Ali, his operations mentioned, 18 n., 23, 169 n.  
 Hyder Beg Khan, Vizier's Minister : conferences with him about Oude Treaty, 168, 169 ; anxious to execute its stipulations, 135  
 Hyderabad, Nizam's capital, 6, 14, 177, n. 1, 2 ; 178  
 Ives, 135  
 Jaghire possessions, 80  
 Jamaul Beg, commander of division of Tippoo's army, killed in action, 5  
 Jaswant Rao Holkar, invasion by him feared, 200  
 Jones, Sir William, 176, 177  
 Jumma, 73, 79, 99, 118, 138  
 Jurisdiction, reform of, 124-126, 141, 176  
 Jycottah, Dutch fort, purchased by Rajah of Travancore, 2  
 Kannambaddy, near Seringapatam, 23, 30, 31  
 Karigaut ford, 52  
 Karig(h)aut Pagoda, near Seringapatam, 26, 28, 30, 44, 50, 51, 53  
 Kaway (Kavvāyi) River, 65

- Kennaway, Sir John, Captain, Cornwallis's aide-de-camp: sent to Hyderabad, 178; secures Nizam's co-operation against Tippoo, 6, 7, 13; Cornwallis's deputy in negotiations with Tippoo, 60, 71
- Khas explained, 106, n. 1
- Khristnagerry, fort, 66
- Khristna. *See* Kristna
- Kistna district, 177, n. 1
- Knox, Lieutenant-Colonel, 5, 41, 42, 51
- Kookulpour district, 101
- Kristna(h) River, 21, 130, 132
- Kumarwad-dien Khan, 57
- Kyd, Captain, 62
- Lake, Right Hon. Lord, Cornwallis's letter to him, 199
- Land revenue: increase, 102, 119, 180; settlement, 2, 17, 72-80, 85-122 *passim*, 137-139
- Langley, Major, 41
- Lascars, 154, 162
- Law, Hindoo and Mahomedan (Muslim), 116, 141, 142, 176, 177
- Lennan, Lieutenant, 41
- Little, Captain, in command of three Bombay battalions, with Marathas, 48; joins General Abercromby, 69
- Maal Adawlut. *See* Courts
- Macleod, Lieutenant, 43
- Macpherson, James, "agent for the Nabob of Arcot," 143
- Macpherson, Sir John, 81; his financial arrangements, 84, 171; on Indian affairs, 85
- Madan, Captain, Cornwallis's aide-de-camp, 62
- Madras Presidency: pays tribute to Nizam, 177, n. 1; conduct of Government, 7; headquarters of General Medows, 1, 7, 8; Cornwallis goes to, 17; cavalry, European infantry, 155; native troops, 47, 149, 153, 154, 156. *See* Arcot, Campbell, Carnatic, Fort St. George, Medows, Oakeley
- Magri, camp of Tippoo, 21
- Mahajee Sindia: his ambitious schemes in Hindostan, 144, 145 n.; his part in negotiations of alliance against Tippoo, 6, 133, 134; complains of Vizier's conduct, 143, 144; Cornwallis's attitude towards him, 145; likely to leave Hindostan, 146
- Mahomedan law. *See* Law
- Mahrattas. *See* Marathas
- Malabar Coast: basis of operations against Tippoo, 6, 19, 32, 132; frontier strengthened by peace treaty, 61, 64, 65; new Government, 67, 68; native troops, 149
- Malcolm, Henry, Lieutenant-Colonel, wounded at Seringapatam, 45
- Malda, 181
- Malet, (Sir) C. W., Resident at Poona: his negotiations with Marathas, 127, 131, 170; negotiates alliance against Tippoo, 6, 7, 10-13; and treaty of guarantee, 69
- Marathas: difficult negotiations with them, 127, 132; assistance against Tippoo of greatest importance, 129-131; confederacy, 130; terms of treaty with them, 132, 133, 144, 145; invited to form alliance against Tippoo, 6, 10-12; ready to co-operate, 13, 14, 19, 20; their force arrives late, 34, 38; cavalry action, 55; their portion of Tippoo's country, 69; disputes with Nizam not interfered with, 197, 198; interested in Mirzapore commerce, 136; in Hindostan, 146; position of Berar Government amongst them, 129. *See* Hurry, Mahajee, Malet, Moodajee, Peshwa, Poonah, Purseram
- Maxwell, Lieutenant-Colonel, in Mysore war, 27-29, 42, 44, 51, 52
- Medows, (Sir) William, Major-General: appointed Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Madras Presidency, 8, 9; his operations against Tippoo, 1, 14-16; proposes to dethrone him, 18, 19; joins Cornwallis's army, 27, 41-44, 51, 53; praised by Cornwallis, 61; refuses to take his share of prize-money, 62
- Meer Allum, Nizam's Minister: sent to army, 39; takes part in negotiations, 40
- Meer Camur ud-din Cawn, Tippoo's son-in-law, killed in action, 5
- Megna River, 117
- Mhadajee Pundit, Nana's household Dewan, 136
- Midnapore: revenue collections, 87, 101; internal duties, 107, 116; revenue settlement, 87, 100, 102, 115
- Mincehourah, district in Midnapore, 101
- Mirzapore, development as commercial centre, 136
- Mogul Emperor. *See* Shah
- Mogul Government: confusion of revenue under, 79, 96; practice of, 96, 99, 107
- Moodajee Boosla (Bhonsla), Rajah of Berar: mission to him, 128; his relations with other Maratha chiefs and

- Nizam to be ascertained, 129 ; co-operation with him in case of war with Tippoo, 130
- Moorshedabad, Court of Appeal, 125
- Mopias, the class of, in Malabar Coast district, 68
- Moulavies (Moolvees) to assist in criminal trials, 142, 176
- Mozuffer Jung, 170
- Mudgheri, hill fort, unsuccessfully blockaded by Marathas, 37
- Mysore, nature of country described, 30, 69
- Mysore, fort, 23
- Naib Nizam, 141
- Nairs, class of (Rajahs), in Malabar Coast district, 68
- Namcool, fort, 66, 67
- Nana Farnavese, Minister of Peshwa : Cornwallis proposes to him provisional engagement against Tippoo, 133, 134, 170, 171 ; wants to build house in Benares, 136 ; his attitude after Mysore war, 70, 145 n.
- Nash, Lieutenant, 57, 58
- Native troops (*see* Bengal, Bombay, Madras), officers of, 192
- Nesbitt, Lieutenant-Colonel, 41, 42, 51
- Nizam of Hyderabad : (i.) Salabut Jang murdered, 177, n. 2 ; (ii.) Ali (Khan) murders his brother, 177, n. 2 ; receives tribute from Madras Government, 177, n. 1 ; his treaty with E.I.C., 178 ; relations to Moodajee, 129 ; surrenders Guntoor Circar, 177, 178 ; invited to join alliance against Tippoo, 6, 12 ; ready to co-operate, 10, 13, 14 ; his cavalry, 19-22, 25, 27, 29, 32, 34, 35, 38, 55 ; sends son and Minister to command army, 39 ; declines separate negotiations with Tippoo, 39 ; state of his troops, 48 ; his share of Tippoo's country, 69 ; his disputes with Marathas not interfered with, 197, 198 ; (iii.) Secunder (Sikandar) Jah, Ali's son, takes part in campaign against Tippoo, 39, 47, 68 ; his forlorn condition, 200
- Nizamut Adawlut, 126
- Nuddes, 110
- Oakeley, Sir Charles, 43, 67, 196
- Opium contracts, 139, 140
- Orissa, revenue settlement, 87, 105
- Ottoor, fort, 66
- Oude : allowance to Resident, 171 ; commerce with, and defence of, 169 ; imports subject to duties, 174 ; monopolies in, 81 ; treaty with, 136, 172 ; Vazier of (title given by Mogul Emperor to sovereign of) : treaty with him, 135, 169, 170 ; commercial treaty, 172, 174, 179 ; his character, 135 ; relations with Sindia, 143-145 ; Cornwallis against extorting money from him, 81
- Oussore, Tippoo's fort, taken by Cornwallis, 35, 36
- Outdradroog, 57
- Palacatcherry, fortress, taken by General Medows, 15, 65
- Palicod Pass forts, attacked and taken, 36
- Palmer, Major, Resident with Mahajee Sindia, 133, 134, 143
- Pannadoor, 18
- Patna, Court of Appeal, 125
- Pattahs. *See* Pottah
- Perambaucum, battle of, 169 n.
- Pergunnah explained, 106, n. 2
- Periapatam, 23, 31, 33
- Peshwa : (i.) (Baji Rao I.), 145 n. ; (ii.) (Madho Rao Narayan), Bombay troops offered to him, 127 ; Cornwallis withdraws the offer, 128 ; negotiations about treaty against Tippoo, 170 ; his relation with Sindia, 145, 146 ; sends forces against Tippoo, 34 ; declines separate negotiations with Tippoo, 39 ; subsidiary force for him refused by Cornwallis, 198 ; (iii.) (Baji Rao II.), forlorn condition, 200. *See* Marathas, Nana, Poona
- Pettah (or town) of Shahr Ganjam, 53
- Pitt, William, Cornwallis's predilection for him, 82, 85, 197 ; on China embassy, 183 ; new charter for E.I.C., 186, 189
- Poodicherrim Ghaut reached by General Abercromby, 21, 65
- Poona, Peshwa's capital, Government : negotiations with regard to Maratha confederacy against Tippoo, 6, 11, 127, 130-134 ; Cornwallis complains to, 48 ; orders Purseram Bhow to return to Cornwallis, 49 ; Resident, *see* Malet ; Sindia likely to go to, 134, 146. *See* Peshwa
- Portuguese forts conquered by the Dutch, 3
- Pottah explained, 93 n., 94, 97, 120
- Prince of Wales, 80, 81, 84
- Purling, 82
- Purseram Bhow : in command of Maratha forces, 34, 35, 37 ; abandons his part of general plan, 46, 47 ; success

- in Bednore, 46, 49; ordered back, 48; returns to Cornwallis, 49, 64; returns to Poona, 68
- (Raghuji) Bhonsla, Rajah of Berar, unfriendly disposition towards E.I.C., 200
- Rahdarry duties, 109, 110; explained, 110 n.
- Rajahmundry, district of, 177, n. 1
- Rajeshahy, district of, 93
- Rawdon, Lord, letter of Cornwallis to him, 82
- Revenue collectors, payment, 166-168
- Revenue Courts to be abolished, 124
- "Revenue money," allowance to field-officers, 162
- Revenue settlement. *See* Land
- Riza Ali. *See* Ali
- Rohillas, their revolution at Delhi, 179
- Ross, Lieutenant-Colonel, 19; letter from Bengal to him, 194, 197
- Roydroog, 35
- Russell, Major, 41
- Ryacotta (Rayakottai), fort, 66
- Ryots, 74, 75, 77; relations between them and Zemindars, 87, 90, 92-98, 104, 120; their protection, 78, 95, 122; opium, 139, 140
- Salabut Jang. *See* Nizam
- Salem country, 66
- Salsette, island of, negotiations for exchange of, 131
- Samoga (Shimogga) taken by Purseram Bhow, 49
- Sankerydroog, fort, 66, 67
- Sayer (variable imposts), 80
- S(c)india. *See* Daulat, Mahajee
- Secunder Jah. *See* Nizam
- Sera, town, 35, 37
- Seringapatam, capital of Mysore, 18; first attack on, 19-26, 29, 30, 33, 34, 38; second attack, 41, 43, 46-48, 54-56, 63, 64, 108
- Shah Alam (Allum), Emperor at Delhi: cedes Guntoor to Clive, 177, n. 1; blinded by Rohilla chief, 179
- Shahabad, district in Behar, 87
- Shahar Ganjam. *See* Pettah
- Shore (Sir John): Cornwallis on his great services, 72, 85, 137; his minutes on revenue settlement discussed, 72-111, 115; his objections against permanent settlement, 73, 76, 78-80, 86-106 *passim*; his new propositions, 102; on previous experience, 106, 107; on internal duties, 107
- Shroffs (money-changers), 138, 139
- Sicca rupees only to be used for revenue payments, 139
- Sindia. *See* Daulat, Mahajee
- Slavery, obstacles to abolishing it, 141
- Sonarpet, redoubt (Seringapatam), 43, 50
- Souillac, M. de: letter answered by Cornwallis, 168
- Southampton, Lord: Cornwallis's letter to him, 80
- St. Helena troops, 164
- Stuart, Lieutenant-Colonel, 27, 41, 42, 51, 52
- Sudder Dewanny Adawlut. *See* Court
- Sultan Bastion (Seringapatam), 56
- Sunderbunds, 117, 119
- Superior Criminal Court. *See* Court
- Taje (Teige) Wunt, Rajah, 19, 38. *See* Nizam's cavalry
- Talook explained, 90 n.
- Talooks, separation of, 116
- Talookdars explained, 77, 78; 98, n. 1; their relation with Zemindars, 87, 90, 98, 99; in Midnapore, 100, 101; question as to their proprietorship of the soil, 99, 105
- Tambercherry Pass, 65
- Tanjore, Rajah of, succession to him, 143; (town), 67
- Tippoo Sultan: alliance against him contemplated, 127, 128-133, 170, 171; his relations with France, 127, 132, 171; breaks treaty of peace, 1, 10; against Rajah of Travancore, 2-5; alliance against him, 6, 11-14; Floyd to retreat, 15; his losses, 18, 19, 21; bars approach to Seringapatam, 21, 24; battle of Arikeri, 26-29; new losses, 36; attempts to disturb Coimbatore, 37; his separate overtures to Cornwallis and the allies, 19, 39, 40; Secret Committee of E.I.C. desires war with him to be speedily concluded, 194; his preparations, 43; successfully attacks Nizam's troops, 46; resolved to defend Seringapatam, 49; attack on his position before Seringapatam, 44, 45, 50, 52-54; his cavalry defeated, 55; negotiations with him, 57-63; objects to cession of Coorga, 63; signs treaty, 64; Cornwallis's comment on treaty, 65-67, 69-71; portion of territory left to Tippoo, 69; treaty of guarantee against him, 69-71
- Travancore country, 3-6, 9, 14, 65; Rajah of, purchases Dutch forts, threatened and attacked by Tippoo,

- 3, 4; applies for the assistance of Company's troops, 5, 7, 10, 11, 14  
 Trichinopoly, 67  
 Tuccoojee (Tunkojee) Holkar: his position among Marathas, 145; invited to join alliance against Tip-poo, 6  
 Tumbuddra (Tungabhadra) River, 21, 35, 130, 132  
 Velhout, 19  
 Vencatagherry (Venkethgherry), 19-21  
 Vizagapatam, district of, 177, n. 1  
 Vizier. *See* Oude  
 Wellesley, Lord (Governor-General), 197  
 Wellesley, Sir Arthur, Major-General, on the Treaty of Bassein, 197  
 Woodhouse, John, East India Director: Cornwallis's letter to him, 181  
 Zemindar(r)ies: smaller estates united into large, 96; to be dismembered, 116; primogeniture in, *ibid.*  
 Zemindars: their right to property in land, 73-75, 77-80, 95-99, 102, 105-108, 137; relations with ryots, 75, 87, 92-98, 104, 120; with talookdars, 87, 98, 99; in Midnapore, 101; ten years' settlement, 102, 103, 105, 106; collection of internal duties, 79, 80, 86, 107-110, 138; their poverty, 114, 115, 138; their indolence, 90, 91, 115, 139; as cultivators of waste lands, 117, 118; officers' loans to them, 161  
 Zillah. *See* Court





